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President:	Sir John Sawers/Ms. Pierce	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
	Belgium	Mr. Dhaene
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Koudougou
	China	Mr. Du Xiacong
	Costa Rica	Ms. Villalobos
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Deruffe
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Panama	Ms. Jácome
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	South Africa	Ms. Qwabe
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

Post-conflict peacebuilding

Letter dated 2 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/291)

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08-34772 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.15 p.m.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to within five minutes so that the Council can carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with statements likely to be longer than five minutes are invited to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now give the floor to Mr. Yukio Takasu, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu: I would like to express my deep appreciation to the United Kingdom for its leadership and timely initiative in convening this open debate. I am grateful for the invitation to attend in my capacity as the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission. I am also grateful for the very kind words expressed to the Peacebuilding Commission by many speakers this morning.

The Peacebuilding Commission was established to address the complex challenges of post-conflict reconstruction. I have made conscious efforts to guide the attention of the Commission to peacebuilding gaps in achieving a smooth shift from peacekeeping activities and transition to development. I therefore welcome the opportunity to discuss the issues highlighted in the President's concept note.

First, the Commission's experiences confirm the centrality of national ownership, which is not only for priority activities selected by the Government. It must also serve as the prime mover in carrying out political, security and economic reform. Such leadership and commitment by national Governments are prerequisites to any successful peacebuilding effort. National ownership must be complemented by partnership with local stakeholders and the international partners. In that regard, I would like to stress the important role of the United Nations leadership on the ground.

In both Burundi and Sierra Leone, the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General facilitated the promotion of dialogue among all stakeholders on the ground. Through that process, the integrated peacebuilding strategy was developed to serve as a framework for the coordination of various existing and evolving activities. The leadership of the United Nations representative is also crucial to monitoring progress and issuing early warnings on shortfalls in implementation.

The United Nations representative needs to be equipped with appropriate mandates and resources to execute leadership. At the same time, leadership must be exercised in an informal and flexible manner to mobilize the full cooperation of all stakeholders. Peacebuilding efforts can be more effective when a lead country takes direct charge in supporting a particular country, working in tandem with the United Nations, and brings in new, non-traditional partners.

Secondly, national leadership requires functional institutional and human capacities at the State and local levels. Those capacities are usually limited in most countries emerging from conflict, as many speakers mentioned this morning. It is essential for international partners to ensure the timely deployment of civilian expertise to assist in rebuilding national capacities. Peacebuilding requires the active involvement of multifaceted partners with varied expertise and specialties in such areas as governance, the rule of law, the security and judicial sectors, civil administration — including financial management — basic services, the rehabilitation of infrastructure and private sector development.

The deployment of such expertise should be based on a clear prioritization of peacebuilding needs in each particular phase, linked to priority areas that the Peacebuilding Commission has identified. We welcome the efforts of several Governments, including that of the United Kingdom, to train and maintain a roster of civilian specialists with the various skills and capacities necessary for peacebuilding efforts. We should examine an appropriate mechanism in the United Nations to mobilize those experienced specialists in a speedy manner to support post-conflict capacity-building.

Thirdly, speedy and flexible funding to meet urgent requirements has been a major concern. The Peacebuilding Fund was established to provide catalytic funding in order to fill the immediate funding gaps in the critical areas, activate potential multiplier effects for stability, and induce additional resources for longer-term sustained support. While its volume has surpassed the original target of $250 million with contributions from 45 donors, it would be desirable to see a higher level of resources in light of increasing demands. I would like to take this opportunity to

appeal to all Member States to make generous contributions to the Fund.

The Peacebuilding Fund has been successfully assisting several post-conflict countries, but it is not expected to meet all peacebuilding needs. To achieve maximum impacts on the ground, we should improve the coordination of multilateral and bilateral donors in the country. It will also be important to seek additional means of mobilizing resources to complement the catalytic and therefore limited role of the Peacebuilding Fund. We welcome any innovative proposal, including those of the United Kingdom and others, to increase resources to post-conflict countries that will complement the existing mechanisms and ensure the coherence and effectiveness of all funding resources.

It is clear that there are still many conceptual and operational questions that need to be addressed to better respond to the enormous challenges of post-conflict peacebuilding. The Peacebuilding Commission is ready to engage in further consideration on some of the issues the Security Council has discussed today. I hope that today's discussion will inspire specific actions that we can move forward to strengthen United Nations peacebuilding activities. Finally, I would like again to thank the Security Council for its support for the Peacebuilding Commission.

Before I conclude my statement, allow me to say just a few words in my national capacity.

As Prime Minister Fukuda of Japan expressed in January this year, Japan is determined to play a further active role in the international community as a peace-fostering nation. To that end, we have taken a variety of initiatives to support peacebuilding activities all over the world. Among other things, Japan has extended substantial support to strengthen the peacekeeping and peacebuilding capacities of many African countries, including five peacekeeping operation centres. Last year, we launched a pilot programme for peacebuilding human resources development, which will contribute to meeting some of the gaps I have discussed today. Twenty-nine graduates of the course from Japan and neighbouring countries in Asia are currently working in countries including the Sudan, Timor-Leste and Nepal. The initiative will be expanded into a fully scaled-up programme next year.

Moreover, peacekeeping and peacebuilding will be one of the priority issues to be considered at the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development, to be held in Yokohoma this month, and at the Group of Eight Summit to be held in Toyako, Hokkaido, in July. Japan remains committed to making the utmost efforts to strengthen international peacebuilding activities and to enhance global capacity in this field.

The President: I thank the Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission for his statement and for his comments in his capacity as representative of Japan. I think we are all agreed as to the centrality and importance of the Commission in this work.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to express my delegation's appreciation to the United Kingdom for convening this important debate and for the concept paper (S/2008/291, annex) prepared in advance of this discussion.

My delegation aligns itself with and supports the statement to be made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The concept paper forms the basis for a discussion of three major areas that, we all agree, need to be addressed more robustly within the United Nations system. While we agree with the objective assessment that there is a need for further United Nations efforts to address those areas, we must always bear in mind the discussions that took place prior to the 2005 World Summit, at which it was concluded that there were a number of gaps that must be filled by the United Nations, including the three topics covered by the concept paper.

The world leaders gathered at the Summit therefore agreed to establish the Peacebuilding Commission to carry out the tasks set out in the resolutions providing for its establishment (resolution 1645 (2005) and General Assembly resolution 60/180), in particular bringing together all relevant actors to propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding based on the principle of national ownership; to provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations, including helping to ensure the funding necessary for those

activities; and ensuring the necessary linkages between peacebuilding and peacekeeping activities.

Therefore, we consider today's Security Council meeting an opportunity to build momentum for peacebuilding activities through the Peacebuilding Commission, not through a contest between the Security Council and the General Assembly for control over the Commission, which could undermine the Commission's credibility. Accordingly, we request that the presidential statement to be issued by the Council on this topic include a clear and explicit mandate from the Council to the Peacebuilding Commission to study the best ways to overcome these three obstacles and any others that could prevent the Commission from carrying out its mission — a task that, as the Chairman of the Commission has just reaffirmed, that organ is prepared to accomplish as effectively as possible.

The proposal that the role of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General be enhanced so that they can carry out the work of the United Nations more effectively requires that we distinguish between two scenarios. First, if the country concerned is not included on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Security Council has the right to enhance the role of the Special Representative within a framework that guarantees respect for State sovereignty and the principle of national ownership. On the other hand, if the State concerned is included on the Commission's agenda, the Commission must, on a case-by-case basis, determine the roles to be played by the Special Representative and by each member of the steering committees in various countries, including the United Nations and other relevant influential actors, in particular donor countries and the international financial institutions.

With regard to the rapid deployment of qualified civilian experts specializing in police matters and the reform of the security and judicial sectors, it must first be agreed that each peacebuilding situation requires skills different from those required in other cases. This depends on the background of the conflict and the cultural, ethnic and religious background of the population, among other factors. Thus, it is impossible to determine what type of expertise is required unless the Peacebuilding Commission first identifies priorities and necessary areas for action, in consultation with the authorities of the State concerned. Moreover, it is possible that the building of such a framework could waste huge amounts of financial resources through the appointment of experts whom the United Nations does not need for long periods of time, but only on an ad hoc basis and under vastly different and substantive conditions. That would only place an additional and useless burden on the Organization's regular budget, which we are trying to keep under control.

On the other hand, while we agree with the concept paper on the need to provide rapid and flexible funding for activities aimed at achieving stability in a post-conflict situation, we believe that, given the inability of existing funding mechanisms to do so with the required effectiveness, the best way to accomplish this is to focus on quickly overcoming the defects hampering the work of the existing funding mechanisms and to reform them — particularly the Peacebuilding Fund — rather than thinking about creating new ones.

The experience of the Peacebuilding Fund since its establishment has underscored the urgent need to review its working methods and terms of reference. The General Assembly must do this through its review of the terms of reference, which is scheduled to take place two years after the August 2006 adoption of the terms, in accordance with the Assembly's mandate to provide general policy guidance on use of the Fund. In particular, we believe that the Peacebuilding Commission should participate in decision-making regarding the funding of projects that are peacebuilding priorities in the States under consideration. Thus, the process will not be limited to informing the Commission after the Secretary-General has made funding decisions. We also believe it is necessary to consider raising the ceiling of the Fund's budget — for example, doubling it to $750 million. That would make it possible to expand the base of projects to be funded upon the Commission's decision and to increase the number of recipient States. In that connection, we propose the holding of an annual meeting of the General Assembly dedicated to fund-raising, along the lines of the annual meeting held by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to enhance the financial capacities of the Central Emergency Response Fund.

Once again, I wish to thank you, Madam President, for this opportunity to focus on three major obstacles facing the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. We look forward to working with the Council, with the General Assembly and with our fellow members of the Commission to overcome those

obstacles in order to benefit States emerging from conflict and to enhance and promote the Commission's authority to carry out its work in the way that we all hope it will.

The President: I thank the representative of Egypt for his considered statement. I am sure that we all reciprocate the offer to work constructively together.

I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

Ms. Jahan (Bangladesh): The Bangladesh delegation welcomes this opportunity to participate in this important open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. We thank the delegation of the United Kingdom for having taken the initiative to organize this meeting.

While we align ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement caucus of the Peacebuilding Commission, we have taken the floor to underscore the following points.

Long after the guns have fallen silent, the scars of war continue to haunt the minds of the people as well as the economy of the country concerned. The first and foremost task of post-conflict peacebuilding, therefore, lies in expediting the healing process while, at the same time, creating the conditions necessary to prevent the situation from sliding back into conflict. In that context, the key focus should be on developing an integrated approach, with clear-cut commitments by the Government in question and the international community to broad-ranging interventions meant to restore peace and security, on the one hand, and to bring about economic growth and development, on the other. Needless to say, the country concerned should always play a leadership role in the process of consolidating peace if that peace is to be sustainable.

Analysis of conflict situations reveals that the twin phenomena of unemployment and conflict continued to feed each other in many cases. Empowerment, particularly of youth through education and employment, should be a key focus in preventing situations from sliding back. Furthermore, the overall experience in implementing resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, at all levels has been somewhat mixed.

While we have integrated a gender perspective in some aspects of United Nations peacekeeping operations, in post-conflict peacebuilding efforts much remains to be done. As one of the largest troop-contributing countries, Bangladesh is ever conscious of its responsibility to incorporate the essential elements of resolution 1325 (2000) in the predeployment training of peacekeepers. As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission we will continue remain vigilant in our focus on the provisions of the resolution.

Peacebuilding, being a holistic process, involves inter-agency cooperation across a wide range of issues. The main challenge lies in achieving the necessary coordination between agencies in post-conflict situations. Ownership, especially at the national level, and close coordination between United Nations and national actors and the international donor community are crucial. We would like to reiterate the NAM position that the Peacebuilding Commission should have the central role in post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation. The Commission should be equipped with the necessary resources for implementing its mandated functions effectively.

The concept of "Rapidly deployable and skilled civilian capacity" is being discussed in various forms in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations since 2005. The idea of civilian observers in the context of United Nations peacekeeping operations was floated in previous meetings of the Committee but it was not agreed upon for further consideration. Certain specific areas of multidimensional peacekeeping and peacebuilding — for example disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, rule of law and so on — warrant experts in their own fields. This expertise could be from both military and civilian backgrounds. Hence, we are not in favour of the creation of any type of cadre or pool comprising United Nations staff for rapid civilian deployment. The purpose can be served by filling the vacant posts in field missions and country offices with personnel recruited from Member States and host countries.

Some pertinent questions on this need much more clarification, the most important of which is the question of the relationship between such United Nations capacities and national capacities. We need to remind ourselves that national ownership of the peacebuilding process is a fundamental prerequisite. Any progress towards building such rapidly deployable

capacity, therefore, should be thoroughly discussed in more inclusive forums, including the Peacebuilding Commission.

The question of leadership on the ground also requires careful thought and discussion. We underscore the necessity of close coordination among the Special Representative of the Secretary-General or the executive representative of the Secretary-General, the national Government and the Peacebuilding Commission. We also would like to emphasize that the extended role of the Special Representatives envisaged in the concept paper should in no way undermine the national ownership of the peacebuilding process.

We very much support the concept of a more rapid and flexible funding mechanism. Disbursements from the multi-donor trust funds and other funds should be rapid and immediate to ensure early stabilization of countries emerging from conflict. This is crucial in assisting the national and local authorities in delivering a peace dividend. However, we reiterate that one of the main purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission, as described in General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Council resolution 1645 (2005), is to marshal resources for reconstruction and institution-building in countries emerging from conflict. Therefore, the Peacebuilding Commission should have a central role in any discussion regarding the creation of a new rapid funding mechanism.

Many of the issues and ideas raised in the concept paper before us have for some time been discussed in the Peacebuilding Commission. We believe that the proposals advanced by the concept paper would benefit from further analysis within the Commission itself, which, as an intergovernmental advisory body, is I believe competent to do so. Consultations among the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on these issues are also necessary. We would underscore that these consultations should be inclusive and exhaustive to ensure a practical outcome with pragmatic recommendations.

Finally, our experience in dealing with the country-specific situations in the Peacebuilding Commission strengthens our conviction that the post-conflict peacebuilding process requires the involvement of all the stakeholders: the Government; the Peacebuilding Commission's full membership; potential donors; the United Nations country team; financial institutions; non-governmental organizations; civil society; and the private sector. It would also require the continued support of the Security Council.

The President: Thank you very much for that thoughtful statement. I think we all share the emphasis on inclusivity.

I now give the floor to the representative of Slovenia.

Ms. Štiglic (Slovenia): I have the honour to address the Security Council on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this declaration.

In the interests of time, the EU will deliver an abbreviated statement. The complete and official statement is being distributed in the Council Chamber.

The European Union welcomes this debate on post-conflict peacebuilding and agrees that there are critical gaps in terms of leadership, civilian capability and speed and flexibility of funding. The European Union is committed to continue enhancing its own capacities to address these gaps through its various sources and to continue working with others, not least the United Nations, to that end.

Efficient response to peacebuilding challenges in a post-conflict country largely depends on the capacity of the international community to come together behind a nationally owned common strategy in a coordinated and integrated way, cutting across the political, security and development fields, including in the immediate post-conflict phase.

The European Union has been working to develop its role in this area over the past few years, based on its ability to draw on a broad range of security and development instruments and its widespread geographic presence. The recent period has seen both the strengthening of each set of tools and efforts to improve their coordination. Particular attention is being paid to integrating political, security

and development concerns in the European Union's overall approach.

Areas of support in which this integration is the most visible include security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, with attention to the security-development nexus. For example, an integrated approach to security sector reform is being put in practice by the EU in Guinea Bissau, where all aspects of the reform, civilian and military, are being addressed by the available EU instruments.

The European Union underscores also the impact of climate change, which can significantly increase instability in fragile States by overstretching the already limited capacity of Governments to respond effectively to the challenges they face. The European Union also underlines the importance of effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, recognizing the vital role of the active participation of women at all levels in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding.

The European Union firmly believes that adherence to the rule of law is critical to conflict prevention, stabilization of fragile and conflict-affected environments and sustainable long-term development. Peace and justice are not conflicting goals. The European Union strongly supports the International Criminal Court and its activities and remains convinced that there can be no sustainable peace without justice.

The European Union underlines the importance of the international community coming together behind a common strategy as often as possible. When dealing with an immediate post-conflict phase, the international community needs to have a common strategy and a common understanding of what the needs are — what needs to be done, when and by whom — both at the international level and on the ground. In both cases there is a need to identify leadership or agree upon a division of labour. At the international level, the key is coordination of action. On the ground, that agreement should materialize through cooperation by actors in order to consolidate action and achieve results.

The European Union recognizes the importance of leadership on the ground and deploys EU special representatives who, together with the network of European Commission delegations in the field, work closely with the Secretary-General's special representatives and their staff in the field. As part of the EU crisis response toolbox, European Community tools were also upgraded to allow for more rapid and flexible funding of crisis response programmes.

The European Union agrees that effective cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is essential. We recognize the important role of the United Nations in integrating political, security and development approaches in stabilization and recovery contexts. In many instances, post-conflict stabilization assistance provided under EU instruments is implemented in support of United Nations operations or even channelled through United Nations mechanisms. That cooperation must be pursued.

The European Union remains committed to the strengthening of United Nations crisis management capacities, including on the basis of the joint statement on EU-United Nations cooperation in crisis management. That will continue to be a priority for the EU. In particular, there is scope for increased EU/United Nations cooperation in support of the efforts of the African Union and African subregional organizations in establishing the African peace and security architecture. In that regard, the joint Africa/EU strategy and its first action plan provide a solid base for future developments.

The European Union remains committed to playing an active role in supporting the peacebuilding efforts of the United Nations. In that regard, we recognize that the Peacebuilding Commission is a valuable international instrument that can help post-conflict States to overcome challenges to sustainable peace. We commend the work of the Peacebuilding Commission to date in promoting peace in Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. We hope that the Commission will incrementally be able to consider countries that are more immediately post-conflict.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the presidency of the Security Council for convening this constructive debate. Let me reaffirm that it is a priority for the European Union to continue to provide its expertise and resources to post-conflict peacebuilding around the world as a partner of the United Nations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Matussek (Germany): First of all, we would like to commend the United Kingdom for convening this timely and useful debate on enhancing the international community's ability to respond to the challenges of peacebuilding in the immediate post-conflict phase.

The United Nations and regional organizations, as well as individual Member States, have to address the challenges of immediate post-conflict situations in their complex and multifaceted nature. Germany stresses the increasing role and capacities of the European Union (EU) in that field and associates itself the statement of the EU Presidency today.

In order to achieve lasting peace and take the first steps in reconstruction, we need to rebalance our approach to immediate post-conflict interventions. Political mediation efforts and military peacekeeping operations alone are not enough to achieve lasting stabilization; rather, the root causes of conflicts need to be addressed at the earliest possible stage, in a pragmatic and step-by-step approach. In concrete terms, the military side of peacekeeping needs to be more and better complemented by civilian capacities geared towards a set of priority goals — inter alia, in the fields of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, security sector reform, the rule of law and justice, as well as quick-impact projects, opening up clear perspectives of a peace dividend for the population.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to post-conflict stabilization. On the contrary, specific answers and strategies have to be identified, targeting the root causes of each individual conflict. That is why the international community has to build up expertise and capacities in a wide range of areas in order to respond adequately to the various challenges. We welcome initiatives at the international level, within the EU and by Member States to strengthen those critical capabilities and provide civilian tools for post-conflict stabilization.

We should strive to improve the exchange of information and, wherever possible, to define common criteria and norms — for instance in the field of recruitment, as well as deployment.

The United Nations is the main global actor in the international peace architecture and therefore must play a leading role. The groundbreaking Brahimi report (S/2000/809) led to substantial improvements in the functioning of the overall system. Through the establishment of integrated and multidimensional missions, United Nations peacekeeping operations have started to address key issues of immediate post-conflict situations. In that context, Germany welcomes the new principles and guidelines document distributed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which duly reflects the multidimensional character of today's peacekeeping operations.

Germany would also like to underscore its continued support for the Peacebuilding Commission. It has developed innovative participatory working methods, and it is also beginning to build up unique experience in the area of post-conflict stabilization in its country-specific formats.

We should like to underscore respect for the principle of ownership by the partner country. Building up local capacities must be a central and integral part of our efforts, as we believe that early national ownership of the peacebuilding process is indispensable to achieve positive and lasting results.

The United Nations has also gained increasing experience in building partnerships in concrete operations with regional organizations like the EU, the African Union and the NATO alliance. Germany supports a cooperative approach that combines the value added of each and every actor. In our coordination efforts, we should realistically assess the capacities of the different institutions and actors. We should pragmatically join forces in a spirit of constructive cooperation and coordination, rather than competition. Our endeavours within and outside the United Nations system should be guided not by principled debate but by the capacity to deliver on the ground.

The United Nations system needs to increase coherence in its approach and rapidity in its responses, on the political as well as on the operational level. Those are the foundations for a leading coordinating role in international efforts in peacekeeping and early post-conflict activities. Germany would welcome a broad discussion of possible concrete mechanisms and different options to that end.

In 2004, the Federal Government adopted the action plan entitled "Civilian crisis prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding". The action plan aims to integrate all available crisis-prevention instruments in a unified policy approach for more

effective crisis prevention on the national and international levels. We are developing three key instruments within that framework.

First, we are striving to enhance our police capacity for international missions in the framework of the Civilian Headline Goal of the EU's civil crisis management and on the national level. Currently, Germany employs 248 police personnel in international police missions. Germany is also providing training for police officers at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Centre in Accra.

Secondly, we established the Centre for International Peace Operations, which aims to enhance Germany's civilian crisis prevention and peacekeeping capacities. A key element of the Centre's mandate is the selection and promotion of German civilian personnel for peace operations of the United Nations, the EU and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as other multilateral bodies. Since 2003 the Centre has maintained a national standby roster of about 1,100 experienced and trained experts. Currently, about 110 German civilian experts serve with United Nations peacekeeping and political field missions.

Thirdly, we have developed the Federal Agency for Technical Relief, which is currently participating in emergency relief operations and missions in 75 countries around the world. During the last few years, the Agency has become increasingly active in United Nations peacekeeping missions in, inter alia, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

A lot needs to be done and today's debate is a very welcome step in that direction.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to start by thanking the President for convening this important open debate on peacebuilding in societies emerging from prolonged internal conflict.

We concur with the concept paper prepared for this occasion to the effect that the first six to twelve weeks following the signing of a ceasefire or peace agreement are crucial for internal stability.

In this critical phase, the international community has a vital role to play. The United Nations system must provide integrated, coherent and efficient support in this first stage in order to establish the basic minimum required for medium- and short-term peacebuilding.

However, we have observed that, in some cases, the response from the multilateral system, including the United Nations and other international organizations and entities, tends to encounter two great obstacles in the field that create impediments to properly tackling the challenges of peacebuilding. I am referring to the lack of coordination and, often, the inefficacy of aid.

Generally, once a ceasefire or peace agreement has been signed, the international community reacts enthusiastically by providing various types of cooperation and aid to the society emerging from conflict without waiting for a body or institution to adequately channel this initial enthusiasm. This lack of coordination augments the duplication of functions. In some cases, it further complicates subsequent efforts at medium- and long-term peacebuilding.

An integrated office endowed with ample authority to address all aspects linked to peacebuilding following a ceasefire, including peacekeeping activities and activities related to development and the strengthening of the rule of law, would, in Chile's view, facilitate an integrated approach that allows for the creation of national capacities from the start and the creation of a rational process of medium- and long-term peacebuilding.

We believe that an integrated approach would facilitate coordination, and it is here that the Peacebuilding Commission plays a decisive role. In almost two years of operation, the Commission has demonstrated the advantages of collectively examining the aspects of security with matters connected to development and rule of law in societies emerging from conflict. We should take advantage of the experience acquired by the Peacebuilding Commission and not repeat the mistakes of the past.

Another problem that emerges in the weeks following a ceasefire or peace agreement is that a large quantity of aid begins to arrive at a time when the capacity to absorb it adequately in the field is insufficient. Then, when an assistance network is finally in place to channel the aid, the media have usually left and the flow of aid decreases drastically.

In order to circumvent this paradox, we should be capable of acting swiftly in areas identified as priorities in the first stage of peacebuilding. Here, again, the activity of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund can play a crucial role by

providing rapid aid through coordinated quick-impact projects and by collaborating with the national Government to identify its priorities.

The Fund should not, however, be seen as just another source of funding for development. I would like to conclude my statement by making a call for us to consider the Peacebuilding Commission as the organ that can respond to the majority of questions and difficulties in post-conflict societies. The Commission has the appropriate tools and mandate, and we should feel confident that its integrated approach can face these challenges, alongside the States involved and from the perspective of so-called national ownership.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): New Zealand commends the United Kingdom for initiating this debate and for its useful concept paper entitled "Post-Conflict Stabilization: Peace After War".

We see post-conflict peacebuilding as a critical area of focus for the international community. It is an immediate practical issue, and there are valuable lessons to be learned from our recent experience, as Mr. Brahimi reminded us this morning.

New Zealand is looking to improve its capacity for post-conflict stabilization while simultaneously "learning by doing" in several missions that run in parallel: State-building in the Solomon Islands in an Australian-led regional operation, in Timor-Leste in a United Nations mission alongside a regional operation, and through our participation in the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

We are keenly aware of the need for the international community to improve its approach to peacebuilding in general and to post-conflict stabilization in particular. A military intervention may be necessary in the first instance to stabilize a situation. But, as many have noted here, for the resolution of conflict to be sustainable, we need more wide-ranging interventions to deal with the causes of State failure and initiatives to build both capacity and social services. Those interventions must be coherent, coordinated, and have local ownership. Increasingly, we must be prepared to commit a wider range of Government agencies to complex, multifaceted peacebuilding interventions ranging from the justice system to border control.

United Nations integrated missions have made considerable progress in addressing these challenges. But we do share the concern of the United Kingdom and others that, overall, our international efforts remain too fragmented, too ad hoc and often too fleeting.

Therefore, New Zealand supports the idea of a gap analysis. The United Kingdom has identified at least three critical gaps in post-conflict stabilization process: leadership on the ground, rapidly deployable and skilled civilian capacity, and more rapid and flexible funding.

There are no easy answers to the associated questions in the United Kingdom paper but there are some important points. First, it notes that the United Nations can make a significant contribution to the developing body of international theory and practical learning on post-conflict peacebuilding. In the United Nations context, the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Fund are, of course, central to this discussion.

Coherence with non-United Nations actors is vital. There is a need for coordination of and a clear division of labour among the numerous multilateral agencies involved in peacebuilding. Even in classic United Nations-led interventions, the United Kingdom identifies a broad range of non-United Nations and often non-State actors.

Finally, within the broader context of building deployable civilian capacity, we agree with the identification of police advisers as a critical dimension of the international effort. Developing the capacity for credible, effective policing is essential to underpinning post-conflict transition. A range of recent examples demonstrate the challenges of building police capacity, particularly relative to building military capacity.

Allow me to conclude by stressing New Zealand's continuing commitment to contributing to United Nations led, mandated and authorized peace operations. They are tangible expressions of our collective responsibility to serve fragile post-conflict States, which most need the assistance of the international community.

The President: I thank the representative of New Zealand for her very helpful statement and ongoing commitment.

I now have the pleasure to give the floor to the representative of Ghana.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): I wish to join others in congratulating the delegation of the United Kingdom on its assumption of the Presidency for the month of May and commend its initiative in organizing this open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. The objectives of this debate, as stated in the concept paper, are to identify and address some of the critical gaps in international efforts to help post-conflict countries to stabilize and build sustainable peace as they emerge from conflict.

The letter and spirit of the founding resolutions, adopted by the General Assembly (resolution 60/180) and the Security Council (resolution 1645 (2005)), charge the Peacebuilding Commission, a subsidiary body of these two principal organs of the United Nations, with the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The founding resolutions also mandate the Commission's pivotal and unique role in mobilizing sustained international attention and engagement to help countries recently emerging from conflict to face the formidable challenges in achieving durable stability and sustainable peace. It has long been recognized that sustained international engagement and a strong national commitment are vital ingredients for success in any post-conflict peacebuilding endeavour.

The critical gaps already alluded to in the concept paper are very germane to our discussion. These include the gaps in leadership on the ground, defined as the lack of effective coordination among the various stakeholders in post-conflict countries, be they governments and other institutions of national governance; the United Nations agencies; civil societies; the international financial institutions; bilateral donors or the private sector. Also the need for skilled and rapidly deployable civilian capacity, coupled with rapidly deployable military contingents, cannot be overemphasized. Of course, the absence of adequate funding and of the mechanisms for swift disbursement and allocation of the limited but available financial and other material resources remains a formidable challenge to post-conflicting stabilization and peacebuilding.

Often, the gaps in the implementation of peacebuilding strategies or framework are inherent in the terms of the peace agreements negotiated as a basis for the peace process. A hastily negotiated agreement, perceived to have been imposed on the parties to a conflict lacks the desired long-term commitment needed to make it durable.

Equally important, and not to be overlooked, are the conceptual and operational questions regarding the appropriate relationship between the Peacebuilding Commission and other United Nations organs, as well as between the Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, which, together with the Peacebuilding Support Office, constitute the peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations.

As clearly articulated in its founding resolutions, the Peacebuilding Commission serves as an international advisory body designed to play advocacy, mobilizing and coordinating roles for the benefit of the international community by offering assistance to countries emerging from violent conflicts. We must accept that the Commission has been uniquely and carefully crafted to ensure a holistic approach to peacebuilding, in a manner that recognizes the interdependence of political rehabilitation, socio-economic revival and sustainable peace.

To promote the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Peacebuilding Commission in carrying out all aspects of its mandate and mission, such conceptual, knowledge or informational gaps, which usually are not openly articulated, should be addressed.

While the founding resolutions may have rightly emphasized the principle of national ownership, the fact remains that these founding resolutions also acknowledge the need for the Peacebuilding Commission to work closely with regional organizations, as many conflicts have triggered instability in neighbouring States and regions.

Surely, when it comes to regional organizations, the Commission can learn from the experiences and lessons of the Security Council, which has, of late, given priority to forging closer partnerships and cooperation with regional organizations, in particular the African Union, when dealing with countries on the Council's agenda. Growing efforts are being made by the Commission to bridge the critical gap in regional engagement or regional ownership, as reflected in the recent interactions between the Peacebuilding Support Office and Commission on the one hand, and the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council on the other in Addis Ababa and New York to exchange views on ways to forge closer cooperation and partnerships in dealing with countries currently on the Commission's

agenda, all of which currently happen to be African countries.

But such regional engagement should be reflected at the working level in the field by ensuring a more active involvement of regional and subregional organizations in integrated peacebuilding strategies and in steering committees set up to address post-conflict recovery. In this context, peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict countries in Africa should pay due attention to the AU Framework for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, which places emphasis on tackling the root causes of the conflict to ensure sustainable peace. The international community should more actively support regional and subregional initiatives aimed at expediting the reaction time to crises when they occur.

The need to address the financial resource gap cannot be overemphasized. The establishment of the Peacebuilding Fund as a form of trust fund available for speedy disbursement and quick impact projects, especially in the immediate post-conflict phase, is essential for ensuring sustainable peace. That is why the Peacebuilding Commission should continue to contribute to the Secretary-General's efforts to mobilize resources to increase the level of funds in the Fund.

The capacity gap is a critical gap that has received increased attention. The shortage of national human resources to help rebuild post-conflict countries may be addressed through the promotion of the return of the critical mass of skilled and unskilled citizens, who flee the conflict zone when civil war breaks out. Psychological damage can take much longer to overcome than material damage.

Affected and victimized populations are reluctant to return to their homeland for fear of a relapse to violent conflict and have limited confidence in the peace processes. Some may seek vengeance or revenge. More attention should therefore be given to integrating the diaspora as indispensable stakeholders in post-conflict peacebuilding processes. Addressing such obstacles to the consolidation of peace in post-conflict countries should also include a commitment to mechanisms for transitional and criminal justice and national reconciliation.

In closing, the truth is that too often political will or goodwill are lacking. Where there is political will underpinned by good faith and good will there is a way. Political will should underpin our collective will to bridge the implementation gaps when decisions are taken.

Conflicts often assume very complex and complicated dimensions once they occur and may not necessarily fall into any neat categories of critical gaps identified by various speakers today. Thus, the Peacebuilding Commission, the other United Nations organs, including the Council, national authorities and regional organizations involved in issues of peace and security, should understand the value of preventive diplomacy on the basis of article 1 of the United Nations Charter, both in countries experiencing conflicts and in those witnessing peace, in order to save succeeding generations, including our generation, from the ravages of war.

The President: I thank the representative of Ghana for that very comprehensive and considered intervention.

I now have the pleasure to give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would first like to thank the United Kingdom for having the initiative to hold this open debate on such a relevant and complex topic within the realm of international relations and the maintenance of international peace and security, namely the consolidation of peace in countries emerging from conflict.

Although efforts to avoid the recurrence of conflict in some countries emerging from violence continue to be insufficient, the international community has now adopted new and improved tools to identify the fundamental issues that must be addressed once armed conflict has ceased.

My delegation believes that it is crucial that the international community take coordinated, urgent and effective measures in the weeks immediately following the cessation of hostilities, taking advantage of the momentum created by the signing of peace agreements, in the knowledge that this is a phase in which all concerned actors show sufficient political will to implement the agreed commitments.

The United Nations must play a pivotal role in the coordination of efforts to re-establish stability and the rule of law, through the innovative tools that make up the Organization's new peacebuilding architecture.

The priorities upon which national and international efforts must focus must be immediately identified through the articulation of an integrated strategy that addresses the issues of security, justice, reconstruction and development.

Determining the priorities that must be addressed by the United Nations system and its national and international partners is a very complex exercise. Every issue is a priority, and each national context is unique. It is therefore crucial that the national Government concerned define such priorities while ensuring national ownership of the process. The priorities identified by the Government and supported by the Organization should have as a first goal the stabilization of the country and the creation of the conditions necessary for its recovery, with the support of all concerned actors. Ensuring peace dividends for the local population should be a top concern when deciding such priorities.

In the same vein, in the formulation of strategies and action plans, programmes and policies should aim at including gender equality and justice in the process of peacebuilding, recovery and reconstruction. Women's role as the centre of the family and society must be highlighted from the very beginning of the process.

Mexico believes that the creation of solid foundations for the sustainable development of the country receiving assistance should also be a goal of utmost importance. The country's self-sufficiency will greatly depend on such foundations. In that sense, Mexico gives special priority to international cooperation, primarily that of developed countries, and to economic support from international financial institutions and regional and subregional organizations.

My delegation notes that security sector reform is a vital component in any integrated post-conflict strategy and recognizes its importance in assuring the transition from peacekeeping to long-term reconstruction, stabilization and development. We therefore believe that special attention should be given, beginning in the early phases of the process, to security sector reform and that it should include a transitional judicial system that strengthens the rule of law and promotes the protection of human rights and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants.

We welcome the fact that the mandates of some peacekeeping missions already include security sector reform and highlight the increasingly relevant role of their civilian components. Moreover, three missions already have support units to address the issue: the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. For those reasons, my delegation considers it important that security sector reform coordination mechanisms be established among the various entities of the United Nations system, both at Headquarters and in the field, in the framework of peacekeeping operations and in post-conflict situations. My delegation would like to particularly emphasize the necessity of enhancing the Peacebuilding Commission's competencies in that area.

Mexico believes that Member States and the Organization should focus efforts and resources on supporting the existing structures of the still-young peacebuilding architecture. Mexico acknowledges the work undertaken in that area by the Peacebuilding Commission and its country-specific configurations, which have proved to be inclusive forums for discussion and effective agreements on the formulation of integrated strategies to confront the enormous challenges faced by the countries on its agenda.

Although Mexico is not a member of the Organizational Committee, my Government has decided to participate in the Guinea-Bissau country-specific configuration, in order to contribute to multilateral efforts to achieve stabilization, self-sufficiency and sustainable development in that country. Mexico is ready to share its experience in such fields as combating drug trafficking, social development, electoral processes, institution-building, the promotion of a culture of peace and civic education, which are fundamental issues in countries emerging from conflict.

In the same vein, in 2007, Mexico contributed to the Peacebuilding Fund, thus reaffirming once again its commitment to the United Nations institutions responsible for promoting and strengthening peacebuilding processes. We encourage the Peacebuilding Commission to continue to make progress and we assure it of the complete support of the Government of Mexico.

The President: I thank the representative of Mexico for his statement and for highlighting security sector reform and his country's engagement.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mr. Maurer (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Madam President, for organizing this debate. Allow me to stress three points on the subject of peacebuilding that are important for Switzerland.

First, we share the analysis that the funding of early recovery activities would benefit from strategic reflection at the highest level and should be dealt with in the context of the peacebuilding architecture as a whole. The experiences of past years clearly show that considerable gaps between promises and the actual disbursement of funds exist; that allocation criteria are inadequate; and that there are multiple funds whose governance remains fragmented. The goal is thus obvious. We should have more coherent financial structures that would be able to respond to humanitarian allocation criteria, that is, that are flexible, rapid and realistic in terms of risk. At the same time, such funds must have the predictability and the critical mass of development funds.

Secondly, the roles of the United Nations country teams and of the mission leadership on the ground are crucial. The complexity of tasks and of mandates requires that the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and their teams possess a wealth of knowledge and professional skills. We could consider a standard quartet of excellence for complex missions, made up of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General and deputies for the role of resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator, for civil affairs and for military operations.

Moreover, it is in the best interests of Member States that the Security Council not create parallel institutional structures and that it ensure that the lines of command and of decision-making are always clearly defined.

Thirdly, civilian personnel play a critical and increasingly important role in recovery efforts within United Nations missions. My country will continue to provide expertise in various areas to the United Nations, both by providing training and by seconding experts on the ground. At the national level, there are numerous pools of civilian peacebuilding experts in a variety of areas. However, there is still a lack of the relevant instruments within the Secretariat, and that prevents a systematic and coherent deployment of such experts.

The Secretary-General must therefore strengthen the capacities of the system and optimize collaboration among the United Nations, the World Bank and existing national structures. Moreover, the rosters within the United Nations system in various areas of competence are important resources that could be exploited more systematically and could thus improve selection procedures.

Continued concerted efforts aiming at enhancing the quality of international support in the area of early recovery efforts and peacebuilding are both welcome and necessary. I hope that this discussion will be pursued in all of the appropriate forums.

The President: I thank the representative of Switzerland for his thoughtful statement.

I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. Tarragô (Brazil): I would like to thank the United Kingdom presidency of the Security Council for the initiative of organizing this open debate on the major challenges facing post-conflict countries.

The United Nations system has greatly contributed to efforts aiming at stabilization and reconstruction in post-conflict countries. The international response to post-conflict situations has been evolving. Its continued improvement is a task for all of us. We concur with the analysis that better coherence among actors on the ground, with a strong leadership role by the United Nations system, and an early, flexible and expedient mechanism for mobilizing resources in the immediate aftermath of conflicts are key.

The recurrent outbreak of conflict is a symptom of fundamental tensions in a country, but peacebuilding efforts should not only aim at alleviating the symptoms; it is necessary to dive deep into the root causes of conflicts and to engage in a holistic treatment. It is important to work simultaneously on the three pillars that sustain the building of peace: strengthening political institutions, providing security and promoting economic reconstruction. Breaches in

any of those pillars will impair the foundations of long-lasting peace.

Brazil has long advocated the need to integrate a development component into peacekeeping operations. The road from keeping to building peace should be seen as a continuum along which the seeds of a long-lasting peace must be spread in tandem with the provision of prompt and concrete peace dividends to the population.

Our experience in peacekeeping operations in Haiti and Timor-Leste and, more recently, in coordinating peacebuilding efforts in Guinea-Bissau have reinforced our conviction of the correctness of such an integrated approach. In the case of Haiti, we have seen how useful quick impact projects are to the operation of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and for changing the mindset of the population. Brazil strongly supports a significant increase in budgetary resources allocated to projects of that nature. At the same time, it is imperative to step up efforts to support the Government in implementing programmes that can generate employment and income. That is the surest path to the reactivation of the economy, which in turn will provide the State apparatus with the necessary capacity to address the basic needs of the population.

Brazil endorses proposals aimed at devising an emergency budgetary window to deal with unforeseen developments in post-conflict countries. We should not allow unexpected events — such as the recent increase in food and fuel prices — to undermine peace and stability.

In the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, we are following a two-track approach aimed at combining measures with short-term impact with a strategic assessment of the key priorities for the consolidation of peace in that country.

A common trait of post-conflict countries is the institutional fragility of the State, which constrains its capacity to effectively manage public policies. There seems to be a vicious circle in which the absence of response to the most elementary needs of the population sets the conditions for political instability, which in turn further enhances the vulnerability of the already fragile State.

The Peacebuilding Commission, standing at the very heart of the international peacebuilding architecture, is particularly well suited to help turn such a vicious circle into a virtuous one of political stability and economic prosperity. Although still a relatively new body in the United Nations system, the Peacebuilding Commission is proving to add value in the three countries under its consideration. It has been instrumental in assisting local Governments in developing the necessary capacity to tread their own path to recovery and stability, in line with the principle of national ownership.

Following its multifold mandate and relying on the elaboration of integrated strategies, the Commission has also been useful in marshalling resources and galvanizing all relevant stakeholders into concerted action. It has encouraged greater coordination among United Nations bodies and agencies. The focus on the countries on its agenda has helped to strengthen the presence of the United Nations on the ground.

The Peacebuilding Fund has also been playing a very important role in providing catalytic money in areas identified by the Commission. By doing so, the Fund leads by example and prompts other donors to invest in key priority areas for the consolidation of peace. Ongoing efforts to strengthen the relationship between the Fund and the Commission are much welcome and deserve to be further enhanced.

We do hope that the Peacebuilding Commission can continue to grow and evolve over time, take up new countries on its agenda, and further consolidate its niche as an important body to deal with the complex challenges faced by post-conflict countries.

The President: I call on the representative of Jamaica.

Mr. Wolfe (Jamaica): May I at the very outset express my appreciation to the United Kingdom for the very timely initiative of organizing this very important debate on post-conflict peacebuilding.

I have the honour and pleasure to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

During the relatively short time of its existence, the Peacebuilding Commission has worked diligently towards fulfilling its mandate of addressing the special needs of the countries on its agenda, working specifically towards their rehabilitation, recovery and

reconstruction with the clear aim of creating the foundation for sustainable development, as stipulated by its founding resolutions: General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005).

The underlying feature of the Peacebuilding Commission's sustained engagement with the countries on its agenda has been to strengthen State capacity by ensuring national ownership of the peacebuilding process through the inclusion of a wide cross section of key players in the decision-making process, particularly as it relates to the identification of priorities and the recommendation of strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding.

Our focus after virtually two years of the Commission's existence is on further bolstering its effectiveness and capabilities to better fulfil its mandate as the lead player in peace consolidation and on ensuring that the wide network of actors involved can operate effectively, efficiently and coherently in building legitimate national ownership and in establishing and strengthening capacity where necessary, while maintaining sustained international attention on the countries on its agenda.

In that regard, the Non-Aligned Movement stresses the central role of the Peacebuilding Commission as the dedicated institutional mechanism to address the special needs of countries emerging from conflict towards recovery, security and sustainable development through a coordinated and integrated approach to post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation.

A close scrutiny of the concept paper presented as the basis for these discussions reveals certain fundamental questions, the most critical of which are: What do such civilian capacities encompass? How do such capacities differ from already existing international capacity, especially the relationship between such capacities and national capacities, the improvement of which must remain the central objective of all peace consolidation efforts? Furthermore, will the utilization of such capacities come at the expense of other elements of the development agenda? Following upon this, the Movement hopes to see more detailed, inclusive and wide-ranging discussions on how such civilian capacities are to be organized, financed and deployed and on the nature and extent of the role of the United Nations in that regard.

Additionally, the concept paper seems, in our view, to be based on a similar document under discussion in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, on enhanced rapidly deployable capacity. In that regard, NAM believes that clarification as to the nature of the relationship between the two documents would be appreciated.

The Non-Aligned Movement remains of the view that the leadership and the coordinating role of the Peacebuilding Commission are critical components of the peacebuilding architecture and the spearhead for a coordinated, coherent and integrated approach to post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation, as underpinned by the founding resolutions. The lead role of the Commission in post-conflict situations is becoming even more crucial, particularly against the backdrop of the dire situation being faced by countries emerging from conflict, including critical humanitarian and socio-economic challenges such as the high levels of debt burden and severe fiscal constraints, which require the provision of medium- to long-term resources in order to strengthen the foundations for security and stability countries emerging from conflict.

The issues raised by the concept paper — leadership on the ground, the need for a rapidly deployable and skilled civilian capacity and more rapid and flexible funding — are already being considered by the Peacebuilding Commission, especially in its country-specific configurations, and should therefore continue to be subjects for discussion and analysis, in accordance with the Commission's mandate. Advice and recommendations on these and other conceptual issues should thus be provided by the Commission.

Furthermore, in addition to the discussions within the Peacebuilding Commission, the Non-Aligned Movement is of the view that consultations among the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the issues raised by the paper can unearth practical workable results and pragmatic recommendations in an integrated and holistic manner. Given the role of the Peacebuilding Commission as an intergovernmental advisory body, the Movement considers it appropriate — and indeed necessary — that any advice required for the consideration of these issues be sought from the Commission.

The Movement remains convinced that the appropriate forum for addressing matters relating to building peace in post-conflict situations is the Peacebuilding Commission. In that regard, and taking into account the equal stake of the principal organs of the United Nations in the long-term success and viability of the Commission, robust efforts to craft additional comprehensive yet flexible measures to consolidate peace in post-conflict societies should be based on the fullest utilization of the capabilities of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The President: I thank the representative of Jamaica for that very important statement, which included with a number of significant areas for follow-up. We agree with the emphasis on bringing in the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission to address these questions.

I should just like to assure delegations that there is no intention, either in the concept paper or beyond it, to deviate or detract from funding for development. What is proposed would be additional to existing measures, in order to help address some of the questions that the representative raised about post-conflict situations.

I now call on the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): First of all, I wish to congratulate the United Kingdom on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the current month and the delegation of South Africa on an excellent presidency last month.

Madam President, we welcome this open debate initiated by your Government on an important subject. We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Post-conflict peacebuilding is crucial for establishing peace and sustainable development in war-torn countries. Together with conflict prevention and peacekeeping, peacebuilding must be part of a comprehensive response to complex crises. While that concept is well recognized, the challenge is to fully operationalize it in post-conflict stabilization efforts, to ensure coherence and synergy between peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities from the very outset of the engagement of the United Nations, and thus to ensure a smooth transition from peacekeeping to conditions of self-sustaining peace and development.

To ensure such synergy and effective peacebuilding, the 2005 World Summit recognized the need for a dedicated institutional mechanism. That led to the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission. Together with the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund, the Commission is now the central instrument for peacebuilding activities. The unique structure and composition of the Commission was conceived to bring together "all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery" (*resolution 1645 (2005), para. 2 (a)*).

Indeed, several issues reflected in the presidency's concept paper for this debate (S/2008/291, annex) — for example, the need to address the critical gaps in peacebuilding — constituted the basic rationale for the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission and are indeed part of its mandate. As the Non-Aligned Movement and others have pointed out, several of those issues are being discussed by the Commission in its various formats. We endorse the view that all efforts, including this debate, should aim at strengthening the role and the mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The coherence and integration of peacebuilding activities and the provision of timely, adequate and sustained funding are objectives that can best be promoted by the Commission, since all major stakeholders and partners are represented there. However, in order to ensure that that task is conducted effectively, the international community needs to develop a common strategic vision of peacebuilding.

That requires, first, greater convergence between the perspectives of the partners and those of the host countries, based primarily on the priorities and policies of the latter: national ownership and leadership are key for the success of peacebuilding. Secondly, all actors should demonstrate genuine political will and flexibility to ensure effective peacebuilding. Thirdly, in order to ensure a comprehensive approach, the Peacebuilding Commission must be involved in peacebuilding from the initial phases. The Security Council should, we believe, make use of paragraph 16 of Council resolution 1645 (2005) and General Assembly resolution 60/180 to seek the Commission's advice in situations where peacekeeping missions are

still deployed. Empowerment of the Secretary-General's Special Representatives to lead and coordinate peacekeeping and peacebuilding is, of course, desirable. However, this should not supplant, but rather supplement, the authority and the role of host countries.

There is, no doubt, a requirement for adequate civilian expertise, particularly to support rule-of-law activities. Such capacity is already being provided by the United Nations in integrated missions. We also support the Standing Police Capacity. However, the concept of "rapidly deployable civilian capacities", in large numbers and as a standing structure or mechanism, needs further clarification with regard to its objectives and scope, its actual requirements and its possible implications. A somewhat similar proposal — to establish a civilian cadre of 2,500 personnel — was made earlier by the Secretary-General. It became the object of numerous and legitimate questions and concerns.

It should also be noted that civilian capacities with relevant experience and perspectives are normally available in the host countries and among their diasporas, which can and should be harnessed and utilized. Mr. Brahimi's comments this morning were very pertinent in that regard. The objective should be the durable development of national capacities, not steps to replace them. These are conclusions that we derive from the Peacebuilding Commission's discussions relating to the countries on its agenda.

The identification of gaps is a key step in formulating and implementing successful strategies. That should be done not piecemeal but through an objective and comprehensive diagnosis of the situation. Experience has shown that the biggest and most ominous gap in peacekeeping and peacebuilding strategies is the failure to comprehend and address the root causes of conflicts. In particular, the issues of poverty and unemployment and the imperative of socio-economic development have remained largely neglected in plans and strategies.

Post-conflict challenges in several countries are likely to become further exacerbated by the current global food crisis. That was mentioned in the Peacebuilding Commission's discussion on Sierra Leone yesterday. We still lack a strategy that would enable countries emerging from conflict to stand on their own feet to achieve self-sustained peace and development. Many promises of aid remain unfulfilled. Often the benefit and effectiveness of such aid is open to question, a point raised by others and by Mr. Brahimi in this discussion.

One conclusion seems to be that such aid is best channelled through the budgets of the host Governments. On the other hand, many countries afflicted by complex conflicts continue to be deprived of revenues and earnings from their own resources, due to unequal trade regimes, industrial country agricultural subsidies, an inability to process their raw materials and so forth. One example is again Sierra Leone. Insufficient attention has been accorded to national and international mechanisms to halt the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of these countries or, indeed, to enable the countries concerned to make full use of those resources for the benefit of their own peoples.

Thus, a fuller perspective of the peacebuilding challenges and the formulation of adequate response strategies are essential to achieve sustainable peace and development. Such a comprehensive approach can be best pursued through an inclusive and participatory process. The Pakistan delegation expects and hopes that the potential of the Peacebuilding Commission will be fully utilized to this end by all Member States, including by the members of the Council.

The President: Thank you very much for that considered intervention and for highlighting the importance of national capacity. I now have the pleasure to give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Chávez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to commend the United Kingdom presidency for proposing an exchange of views in the Council on peacebuilding in post-conflict situations.

May I first make a few comments about national ownership of the peacebuilding process. For Peru, each conflict has its own internal as well as international dynamic. Despite the underlying similarities in economic or social structures in some conflicts, there are ethnic, tribal, constitutional or historical characteristics that mean that there are no two identical cases or similar groups of relevant actors. Therefore, in order to tackle the post-conflict process more effectively, we have to recognize those features and not follow a single format.

International actors must be aware that a genuine process of ownership of the process of transition and peacebuilding will be more sustainable in the context of security — political, social, legal and economic — if there is social legitimacy providing inclusivity. For that, in addition to political elections, it is necessary to verify practices, rules and institutions for adopting and implementing agreements and for resolving disputes. That will make it possible gradually to extend the jurisdiction of the State, to affirm a legitimate authority with the right to use force, to consolidate central control of the territory with reformed security institutions, and to establish policies to provide public services, to administer natural resources, to encourage investment and to increase budget resources so as to arrive at self-sufficiency. Above all, the process must respect the rule of law and protect human rights as basic obligations.

As regards international cooperation, from the outset it must essentially be directed to strengthening the political system, the conflict resolution system and the training of professional civil servants. At the same time, we must highlight that quick-impact projects are relevant for creating greater awareness and eliciting the support of the local population. The participation of international financial institutions and local and international entrepreneurship are essential for the success of the process.

All this implies a medium- and long-term commitment, which means that the participation of the international community, with the agreement of the State concerned, may take place over several years and in many priority areas and, in some cases, in great depth. All that requires a strategic vision of the peacebuilding process, especially because processes are never linear — they may be regressive, or there may be new circumstances that effect the legitimacy or advances achieved in peacebuilding. That requires, therefore, strategic association among the political, social, educational and economic forces in the State being consolidated and the relevant international actors.

In a society that is rebuilding, it must be clear that the international assistance it receives is designed to strengthen the exercise of its own sovereignty, with full respect for international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter. It must be equally clear that there is a time limit to the provision of aid and that it must follow a programme with clear objectives to measure its progress and viability.

For those who are cooperating, the strategic association must respect political as well as social, economic and historical characteristics and must be based on a long-term commitment on the basis of indicators of progress. In the case of regional or international bodies and institutions of the United Nations system, that long-term commitment requires a convergence of actions and an additional effort for coordination. It may be necessary for regional organizations or the United Nations to lead the international peacebuilding effort to guarantee legitimacy, transparency, coordination and the correct follow-up of the reconstruction process.

The organizations must, therefore, be endowed with a great capacity for analysis, evaluation and planning so that they can react to sudden changes in the situation in the field that might endanger the peacebuilding process. Similarly, there must be a capacity to recognize the changes that the work of the Government and the international actors is producing on the ground so as to adjust policies and possibly the agreed goals. We believe that the Secretary-General can contribute with a description of the current situation and proposals on enhancing the work of the Organization, its organs, funds and programmes for more concerted action.

My delegation wishes to highlight the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, reiterates its support and hopes the Commission will continue to contribute to peacebuilding in Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Burundi and other States that ask it for help. We will continue to support constructively the leadership of the United Nations and the Commission in those efforts.

The President: Thank you very much for that considered statement. I now have the pleasure to give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): First of all, let me avail myself of this opportunity to join the previous speakers in expressing our deepest condolences to the victims of the cyclone in Myanmar and the earthquake in China.

Allow me also to express my delegation's appreciation to the presidency of the United Kingdom for organizing today's important and timely open debate of the Security Council to consider the challenges facing the international community in

stabilizing countries recovering from conflict and delivering sustainable peace. We are also thankful for the concept paper (S/2008/291, annex), which is certainly a comprehensive document that articulates the realities of dealing with situations in countries emerging from conflict. I am certain that the outcome of this debate will greatly benefit nations going through post-conflict stabilization and the peacebuilding process, as well as the United Nations.

Emerging from more than two decades of armed conflict, Afghanistan is well aware of the challenges associated with post-conflict stabilization efforts. Almost seven years ago, following the defeat of the Taliban in December 2001, the Bonn Agreement laid out the path to political transition in Afghanistan. It was clear from the outset that the stabilization of Afghanistan in the post-Taliban period would not be an easy task nor a smooth transition. As a result of long wars and foreign occupations, Afghanistan had become a failed State and a broken society. The reality of the situation was painted very tellingly today by Mr. Brahimi.

In fact, about seven years ago, Afghanistan was a geographical location without a State, a stage for factional wars imposed by invaders and outsiders, a safe haven for international terrorism and extremism, a land where the people lived in constant fear of bandits and thugs, and a country whose citizens were deprived of all their rights. In addition, more than half of its population, being female, could not go to school, work or even obtain simple medical care.

The collapse of the State led to nation-wide insecurity. Millions left the country or became internally displaced, and the social trust had been eroded. People reverted to traditional forms of mutual support, such as tribal and ethnic alliances, which led to increasing societal fragmentation. In a country where agriculture was the chief engine of the economy, illicit drugs became the main source of income. The land began to fuel the war rather than to feed the people.

Since the Bonn Agreement we have come a long way, in cooperation with the international community, in overcoming the enormous challenges of building the foundation of a new political system aimed at promoting long-term stability. We have adopted a new constitution, and, in 2004 and 2005, we held democratic presidential and parliamentary elections, which were overwhelmingly supported by all the people of Afghanistan.

To ensure security, recovery and development, we embarked on security sector reform, which serves as the lynchpin of the entire State-building process in the country. Thanks to the support of our international partners, our security forces have become stronger and effective. Our national army has now reached the level of 76,000 soldiers and has assumed a greater role in the fight against terrorists seeking to destabilize Afghanistan and the region.

In February 2006, five years after the Bonn Agreement, the Afghan Government and the international community came together in London to design a new roadmap in order to solidify our achievements and further empower Afghanistan to attain sustainable peace and development.

Despite all these remarkable gains, we still face challenges that pose a threat to our long-term stability. There are at least four major challenges to peace and stability in Afghanistan — terrorism, narcotics, weakness of governance, and poverty. Those challenges are interlinked, and they are an integral part of the same threat. In dealing with them, we realize that effective stabilization efforts in post-conflict situations require a comprehensive and multifaceted strategy, encompassing the essential components of social and economic development, good governance, human rights and the rule of law, and national reconciliation. Such an approach demands a proactive and sustained engagement of the international community in the process.

From the beginning of the Bonn process in Afghanistan, the United Nations has played a central role in bringing the international community together in order to help Afghanistan's transition from conflict to peace, stability and democracy. During the last year, a new momentum was built to reinvigorate the role of the United Nations in Afghanistan. The appointment of Mr. Kai Eide, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, was an important and welcome step.

Today, we have a broad consensus that the United Nations should focus on its role as lead coordinator, essential for re-energizing efforts to bring about stabilization. The success of the United Nations in delivering its mandate depends on uniting the efforts of all international actors, including the donor

community, NATO, the European Union, countries of the region, international financial institutions and non-governmental organizations, in support of the Government and the people of Afghanistan in their struggle for peace, stability and progress. The key elements for success of the United Nations in its role entail the full cooperation of all parties in being coordinated, as well as the mandate, resources and adequate staff on the ground. That was something Mr. Brahimi also emphasized today.

The role of the United Nations in Afghanistan, similar to that in other post-conflict situations, is to facilitate the stabilization efforts, including supporting institution-building and acting as a bridge between the international community and the Government and the people.

While State-building is a collective effort in post-conflict countries, national ownership of the process is the core principle. Given the enabling role of the international community, it is essential to invest more in establishing capable and functioning national institutions. To achieve that, we need to build national capacity to deal successfully with challenges that arise during the post-conflict stabilization. As experience shows, effective State-building is like a spider web, in that it works best when the web is built by the spiders themselves.

As we have learned from our experiences, the success of the international community and a national Government in the process of recovery from conflict is closely linked with the effective use of resources and aid. It is paramount that the aid be need-driven, not supply-driven. A coordinating strategy should reflect the principles of aid effectiveness and the successful delivery of aid aimed at improving the situation of the country and the people.

In Afghanistan, the enemies of peace and stability will continue their attempts to disrupt the efforts of the Government and the people as well as those of our international partners, efforts that are undertaken to establish a stable, prosperous and democratic Afghanistan. We are confident, however, that those actions will not succeed in interfering with our long-term goal of building a new Afghanistan. In this fight, what we need is the continuing commitment of the international community, time and resources.

I am confident that this debate will help the international community to join its efforts more than ever to deal with and address the challenges of post-conflict stabilization as well as to enhance the coordinating role of the United Nations.

The President: I thank the representative of Afghanistan for his statement and for sharing with us the lessons from Afghanistan. I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Turkey.

Mr. İlkin (Turkey): Allow me to start by reiterating our profound sorrow and heartfelt condolences for the loss of a great number of lives following the natural disasters in the People's Republic of China and Myanmar. We wish the injured a speedy and full recovery. I would also like to join previous speakers in commending the United Kingdom's presidency for organizing today's meeting on post-conflict peacebuilding.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by Slovenia on behalf of the European Union. I would like, however, to make a few remarks about Turkey's approach to the subject.

Turkey has always been a staunch supporter of United Nations peacebuilding efforts. In that regard, we welcomed the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, which we believe effectively fills an institutional gap within the United Nations system in terms of post-conflict management. The achievements of the Peacebuilding Commission so far in Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau are encouraging. We think that the long-term role and capacity of the Peacebuilding Commission should be fostered to enable it to include more post-conflict cases on its agenda.

But that does not in any way absolve the States concerned from their responsibilities to work to build peace in their own countries. The ownership of peacebuilding belongs first and foremost to the country concerned itself.

Experience has shown that it is much easier to win a war than to win the peace. There is a fine and delicate line between peacekeeping and peacebuilding and between peacebuilding and possible relapse. Failure is inevitable if peace is not supported from day one. Relapsing into conflict poses an even greater threat. Tangible results can only be achieved if security considerations and needs are addressed at a very early stage in post-conflict situations. Failure to build national security institutions can lead to the failure in

the peacebuilding process. We have seen that happen in a number of countries in the post-conflict era.

Of course, peacebuilding is not only confined to the security dimension. Simultaneous progress in all the dimensions of peacebuilding is absolutely necessary. Good governance, human rights and capacity-building in all sectors are all part and parcel of the process. One must therefore consider them all together. It is crucial that the vast network of actors operate effectively and coherently. Every country could try to contribute to the process according to its own resources and expertise. That is how we approach the issue.

Cognizant of that wide framework, Turkey is currently focusing on the security dimension of the peacebuilding process and attaches particular importance to the civilian police component of United Nations missions. That is mainly because the demand for United Nations civilian police in post-conflict situations has grown tremendously. At present, Turkey is the eleventh largest police contributor, with hundreds of police officers serving in 10 different United Nations missions. We intend to further increase that contribution. With the ongoing growth in size and complexity of United Nations operations, we believe that we may consider undertaking a comprehensive review of the capabilities and needs of the police component at United Nations Headquarters. In that respect, we equally welcome the establishment of the Standing Police Capacity.

As for the issue of rapid and flexible funding, I believe the Peacebuilding Fund sets a good example. Contributions have exceeded the envisaged target of $250 million. That shows the international community's trust and faith in the success of the Peacebuilding Commission. Turkey has already made a contribution to the Peacebuilding Fund without any caveat. Turkey will continue to support the enhancement of the peacebuilding efforts of the United Nations in every possible way.

The President: I thank the representative of Turkey for his considered statement and for the focus on policing. I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Slovakia.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): At the outset, I wish to underline that we fully align ourselves with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Slovenia, who spoke on behalf of the European Union. We would like to add a few additional comments on the issue of post-conflict peacebuilding that we consider important.

During the six decades of its existence, the United Nations has accumulated immense experience from its peacekeeping and peacebuilding endeavours. However, it has not always been successful in applying lessons learned and in avoiding mistakes in addressing problems of post-conflict recovery in various countries. Unprecedented growth in United Nations peacekeeping engagements and operations will be unsustainable if we do not find effective working solutions and exit strategies. It can only be achieved if efficient approaches to peacebuilding and best practices leading to early and sustainable post-conflict recovery are defined and put in practice.

The 2005 World Summit clearly defined the nexus between security, development and human rights on the global level. We must understand, however, that the same applies to the local level. Only balanced and coherent approaches to peacebuilding in all three areas can secure sustainable peace and development in a country emerging from violent conflict or civil war. We must also understand that there are no quick fixes or shortcuts. We have, all too often, witnessed initial progress and success in one area being ruined because they were not accompanied by similar progress and consistent approaches in other areas, and the country has subsequently slipped back into conflict and violence.

We agree with the President's concept paper on the fact that time is a precious commodity when dealing with post-conflict situations. After the conclusion of peace agreements, there is a narrow window of opportunity, which might close if the expectations on basic needs of people are not met. That is why there is a need for efficient mechanisms allowing for rapid reaction and immediate deployment, not only for peacekeepers but also civilian experts helping national authorities to design integrated peacebuilding strategies aimed at strengthening capacities in all critical areas: security; humanitarian response; securing the basic needs of the population while avoiding the creation of dependency on humanitarian aid and assistance; establishing a solid basis for sustainable development, the rule of law, and respect for human rights; and, last but not least, preventing impunity for gross violations of human rights.

Those elements should be reflected in Security Council mandates for peacekeeping missions from an early stage of the United Nations involvement in post-conflict peacebuilding. That urgency in developing adequate capacities and strategies from the very beginning of international engagement is important so as to ensure that the peacebuilding priorities and challenges are expeditiously and sufficiently addressed, including by creating synergies and complementarity between peacebuilding efforts and reform processes and by identifying solutions that are tailored to countries' specific needs and circumstances. It is important to underline in this context that national ownership is always crucial for the sustainability of the peacebuilding process.

The entire United Nations system must work in harmony and complementarity. There must be synergies between the activities and agendas of the various United Nations bodies and agencies in a post-conflict environment. There is no place for competition between them or unnecessary duplication. We believe integrated missions represent a step forward in that direction. There is, however, a need to examine how to improve their functions and mandates so as to achieve greater coherence and better reflect a holistic approach to post-conflict recovery.

In that regard, we believe that the potential, expertise and comparative advantages of United Nations agencies such as UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund, UNICEF and the World Food Programme should better incorporate such an approach and not attempt to replace or duplicate it in the structure and functions of integrated missions. That would, in our view, also allow, later, for an easier transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, when the mission leaves and the agencies assume their traditional development functions. We believe that the United Nations is best suited to generate long-term support, funding and assistance. It might also be acceptable as an impartial player, to coordinate the actions of various stakeholders of the international community and to secure coherent and consistent approaches.

The Peacebuilding Commission has clearly demonstrated its added value in that respect, and we wish to commend its work thus far. At the same time, we believe that its capacities and tools must be further expanded and adjusted for it to be able to respond to the concrete and diverse needs and requests for assistance of a larger number of Member States. In that regard, we also believe the Security Council should consider adding new States to the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission.

In conclusion, allow me to say a few words about an issue that was discussed in the Security Council last week (see S/PV.5889) and which has direct relevance to the discussion today. I am referring to security sector reform. Security sector reform is an important element of every post-conflict stabilization process. We are pleased with the level of understanding on the necessity of a holistic and system-wide approach to security sector reform that has been reached within the United Nations over the past year. Cases such as Haiti and Timor-Leste clearly demonstrate that, without comprehensive security sector reform, including the establishment of functioning and accountable security, justice and corrections institutions, no sustainable solutions are possible. The recommendations of the Secretary-General in his recent report on security sector reform (S/2008/39), including the creation of an inter-agency coordination mechanism within the Secretariat and a pool of external experts, are fully in line with the thrust and logic of this debate, and we believe they should be implemented as soon as possible.

Finally, thematic debates, such as the current one, involving various aspects of efficient peacebuilding contribute to a better understanding of the problem. Now there is a need to consolidate the mandate of the Security Council and the various United Nations bodies and create proper United Nations tools and mechanisms to also reflect that understanding in practice. In that respect, we welcome the draft presidential statement prepared by the United Kingdom, which summarizes the basic principles of post-conflict peacebuilding and, among other things, invites the Secretary-General to provide advice within 12 months for the relevant United Nations organs on how best to take this issue forward within the United Nations system. We fully support that idea, and we are ready to participate in future discussions on the matter.

The President: I thank the representative of Slovakia for again highlighting security sector reform.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you, Madam President, for convening this open debate and for having circulated an informative concept paper (S/2008/291, annex).

More than 11 years have passed since the Guatemalan peace accords were signed. Notable progress has been achieved, to such an extent that it is a matter of pride for us that the standing item on the situation in Central America no longer appears on the agenda of the General Assembly. However, some effects of the conflict persist to the present day and, at any rate, the peace process in Guatemala offers some lessons that, in our opinion, can enrich today's debate. I would like to refer very briefly to four characteristics of our peace process, which, in turn, support four conclusions. These address some of the questions posed in the concept paper.

First, it was the national stakeholders, in particular the Government and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca, that led the peace process. The United Nations and the Group of Friends of the process were invited by both sides to support the negotiations and, subsequently, the implementation of the peace agreement. At no time did Guatemalans in general perceive external actors as intrusive elements. Rather, they were present at the express request of the parties. I mention this only because the concept paper circulated today to orient our debate emphasizes the role of the United Nations in post-conflict situations. But before the Organization gets involved, however obvious this may seem, it is indispensable for national stakeholders to bear the primary responsibility for peacebuilding. That underlines the role that the United Nations can play in domestic capacity-building.

Secondly, the United Nations has played a uniquely important role in Guatemala, the scope of which has changed over time. The Organization was perceived as an objective facilitator without an agenda of its own. First, it supported the negotiations between the parties. Then it played a verification role with respect to human rights. In 1997, that verification role was augmented to cover all aspects of the peace accords. In 2004, as proof of the progress achieved, the United Nations Verification Mission left Guatemala. But the United Nations presence has continued and is now manifested through an office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

It is also interesting to note that, except for a brief Security Council mandate to send a contingent of military observers to Guatemala for three months, the United Nations presence was always under the authority of the General Assembly.

Thirdly, during the existence of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala, the United Nations had two presences in Guatemala: the director of the Verification Mission and the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system. While that situation at times led to overlap and a certain amount of tension, it did not in general impede an acceptable level of coherence in the Organization's activities in Guatemala. That was due to two elements. On the one hand, it was the Government that set the priorities and guidelines for action for such activities, and on the other hand, the two heads of mission made deliberate efforts to act in a coordinated manner. In that respect, although the recommendation contained in the concept paper prepared by the United Kingdom on placing all United Nations activities under the responsibility of a single person is noteworthy, our experience also suggests that alternative pragmatic solutions that can be acceptable from the point of view of coherency.

Finally, I mentioned at the outset that some effects of the conflict persist, which is another way of saying that the phase of peacebuilding and reconciliation can be protracted. That is especially true when a change of attitude is needed so that a culture of tolerance and dialogue can blossom where it did not exist before.

The concept paper to which I have referred several times correctly emphasizes the near term, but our experience indicates that we must persist for a very long time if we wish the rule of law and democratic institutions to take root. It is for that reason, and to combat the important islands of impunity that still persist in my country, that last year Guatemala again partnered with the United Nations in a creative exercise to strengthen penal prosecution through the creation of the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala.

Those are the points we wished to bring to the attention of this Chamber.

The President: I call on the representative of Thailand.

Mr. Punkrasin (Thailand): First of all, Madam, I wish to congratulate your delegation on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. I would also like to take this opportunity to express appreciation, through you, to the United Kingdom for its initiative to hold this timely open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding and for the concept paper for the debate.

Peacebuilding requires the sincerity and genuine commitment of all parties concerned. The lesson that we have painfully learnt is that many conflicts settled through negotiations and peace agreements are, in fact, unsettled. Within a few days, weeks, months or years, many areas relapse into conflict. Those who suffer the most are civilians, especially innocent women and children. They have to bear the brunt and brutality of wars, scared for their lives and unable to see what kind of future, if any, might lay ahead for them. Conflict can leave life physically and mentally scarred. The relapse of peace into war may further shatter the people's spirits and hopes. The fragility of peace is therefore something we need to watch carefully, and we must expend our utmost effort to break the vicious circle of conflict.

In order to secure lasting negotiated peace, there is an urgent need to implement peace agreements to maintain the commitments of parties. From a different perspective, when the relapse occurs we need to look back and carefully and critically examine what went wrong, why the conflict broke out again and why peace did not last. Perhaps the peace was forced; perhaps the agreement was unfair; perhaps the parties were pressured into giving in. As a result, the peace was not real. Despite good intentions, it was filled with mistrust and lacked the spirit of cooperation. What is more important is what we should do to address the error and prevent the future repetition of history.

As I mentioned earlier, peacebuilding needs the sincerity and commitment of all parties, and they must be prevalent at all levels, including the local, national, regional and international levels. The international community, the United Nations in particular, could play a vital supporting role in building and sustaining peace in areas emerging from conflict. It must be emphasized that international undertakings must be made with a coherent approach and in a coordinated manner.

A number of United Nations system agencies are involved in the peacebuilding processes, including the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNICEF. Also pertinent are other international organizations, the international financial institutions, regional organizations and civil society.

However, it is imperative that peacebuilding be nationally owned if it is to last after the end of international peacebuilding support in that area. International leadership on the ground is important, but it is even more important that the international community promote local and national leadership and capacity on the ground and thereby reinforce national ownership.

Peace should be looked at not only from the military perspective; it should also be considered in the socio-economic, cultural and development contexts. Peacebuilding should enhance security, stability, justice and the rule of law, good governance, socio-economic development and, ultimately, human security and the livelihood of the people. My delegation welcomes the presidential statement on security sector reform, issued under the symbol S/PRST/2008/14 and adopted last week, which rightly points out that such reform is a necessary component of peacebuilding. However, it is only one among many.

The peacebuilding process must lay the foundations for both security and sustainable development. Security sector reform can help improve the institutional infrastructures of a war-torn country, but it may not expeditiously yield direct improvement in the lives of the people in the short and long terms. My delegation is of the view that it is essential that peacebuilding incorporate development elements in its agenda. The scope of peacebuilding may thus have to be expanded and would be more suitable for discussion in the frameworks of the Peacebuilding Commission and the General Assembly. However, the inclusion of development issues opens more windows for the international community to contribute more assistance to the multifaceted peacebuilding process.

The presidential statement also emphasizes the important role of the Peacebuilding Commission in ensuring continuous international support for

post-conflict countries. My delegation believes that the Commission would be the appropriate forum, under the guidance of both the Security Council and the General Assembly, for such discussions in detail concerning international peacebuilding efforts and strategies.

There have been some debates concerning the transition and gap between peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities on the peace continuum. The United Kingdom's concept paper raises the issues of rapidly deployable capacity and funding. My delegation would like to share its initial thought that peacebuilding activities could and should be prepared in advance in terms of human and financial resources. The activities may have to begin, in some cases, even before the completion of the peacekeeping operations. A smooth transition must also be ensured. As a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, my delegation is aware of the discussion concerning the line drawn between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. It may be a necessary overlap, but the special representative of the Secretary-General and the resident coordinator may perhaps have to play dual roles in both activities.

As a troop-contributing country, Thailand has participated in United Nations and international peacekeeping operations for many decades. My delegation always views our troop contributions as an honour for the opportunity to work side by side with peacekeepers from other troop-contributing countries and to help bring peace to the world. My delegation can assure the Security Council that our commitment to United Nations peacekeeping remains unwavering. Furthermore, as members may well be aware, Thai troops are recognized not only for their bravery, but also for their congeniality, expertise and development contributions to local communities.

For us, the concept of peace equalling security and development is not new at all. Our interest has never been limited to peacekeeping. My delegation believes that we could perform even better in peacebuilding activities. With our experiences and expertise to share, we could make a tremendous contribution to the Peacebuilding Commission. It is in that regard that Thailand has decided to present its candidature for the Organizational Committee of the Commission in the General Assembly category for the term 2008-2010.

The absence of conflict does not mean that there is peace. Peace itself and peacebuilding are a long process of reconciliation. Peace can be sustained not by force, but by nurture. It is mainly the responsibility of all parties concerned to faithfully adhere to jointly accepted peace agreements. The international community must also sincerely assist countries emerging from conflict, whenever needed and possible, in building peace in those countries, regions and the world.

The President: I thank the representative of Thailand for his very thoughtful contribution and for highlighting the issue of sustainable development. I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation deeply appreciates your initiative, Madam President, not only in convening this open debate, but also in providing a timely concept paper (S/2008/291, annex), which highlights the underlying principles and challenges confronting post-conflict peacebuilding.

We share your view that peace operations are a shared responsibility that depends on the support and cooperation of a range of actors. As a result of our experience in Nigeria, and as a country that has devoted enormous resources — including lives — to United Nations peacekeeping around the world, we believe that the primary challenge is how to translate peacebuilding initiatives into concrete benefits that touch human lives at basic levels. Another persistent challenge is how to coordinate and create synergy among various peacebuilding actors and stakeholders for a fully integrated response following the signing of peace agreements. Overcoming those challenges demands swift implementation of the strategic frameworks developed for the countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Peacebuilding requires sustained political attention as well as flexible financial and material resources. Only when these are combined with speedy delivery can tangible results become manifest. We are witnesses to situations where the slow delivery of approved funds has compounded the difficulties of recovery efforts and, in fact, has impeded the deployment of international personnel and materiel. We would therefore like to caution against political and financial apathy, especially when time is of the essence and the situation is urgent.

In that context, and mindful of the ever-increasing demands on the Peacebuilding Fund, which

have raised valid concerns about its sustainability, we urge the establishment of a funds monitoring and tracking mechanism to follow up on the commitments often made at donor conferences. My delegation endorses the call for the establishment of a United Nations fund to provide support for reconstruction. In order to ensure its efficacy and solvency, such a fund should, in addition to seeking contributions from national Governments, explore voluntary funding sources such as multilateral banks, international foundations and global corporations.

Regarding the enhancement of civilian capacity in critical functional areas, such as justice and security sector reform, health services, civil service administration and transitional justice, we believe that Nigeria's Technical Aid Corps programme constitutes a model that the Peacebuilding Commission should seek to adopt to fill capacity gaps in post-conflict countries. Since its inception, in 1987, more than 3,000 volunteers have been deployed on a bilateral basis across 38 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. Under the Technical Aid programme, specialized personnel — medical doctors, nurses, lawyers, educationists and engineers — are deployed from Nigeria to provide support and capacity-building for the receiving countries, on the basis, of course, of the requests and expressed needs of those countries. In post-conflict situations, the Peacebuilding Commission, in consultation with national Governments and other stakeholders, can build on this model to solve capacity limitation problems, especially in addressing the need for judicial experts, human rights specialists and civilian police. That is a crucial way to ensure that appropriate experts are rapidly deployed.

In a globalized world, there are imperatives for effective peacebuilding. Coordination and coherence constitute such imperatives. We therefore call for improved coordination among international peacebuilding actors in the field. The Peacebuilding Commission needs to strengthen its relationships with non-governmental development partners and with regional and subregional organizations. In that context, we believe that the African Union's Policy Framework on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development and the conflict resolution mechanism of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which deals explicitly with peacebuilding, should guide peacebuilding efforts in Africa.

My delegation wishes to underline the importance of the regional dimension to the entire peacebuilding process in Africa. The threats posed by illicit arms trafficking, human and drug trafficking, the energy and debt crises, internal militancy and other transboundary challenges cannot be neglected. The nexus between those threats and incessant relapses into conflict should never be discounted. Indeed, my delegation believes that those issues, in particular the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, constitute the greatest threats to peacebuilding in Africa. In recognition of that reality, Nigeria has been unrelenting in providing financial and material support for the implementation of several peacebuilding projects in the subregion — under, of course, the rubric of ECOWAS — and we pledge to continue to do so.

The President: I thank the representative of Nigeria for setting out some important areas for follow-up, including drawing on the experiences of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Nigeria.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Sen (India): Let me begin by joining others in expressing India's heartfelt condolences on the losses of lives sustained by two of our close neighbours, the People's Republic of China and Myanmar, as a result of natural calamities. Let me also place on record our appreciation of the leadership of the Security Council by the United Kingdom presidency for the month of may.

It was in recognition of the international community's less-than-stellar record in securing lasting peace after more successfully stopping conflict that we established the Peacebuilding Commission as the centrepiece of an international effort to promote post-conflict peace consolidation. In that context, our delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

I shall try to address the questions posed in the concept paper (S/2008/291, annex). The roots of peacebuilding go deep into the Security Council mandate on peacekeeping. It is therefore important to implement Article 44 of the United Nations Charter and to involve troop-contributing countries in shaping that mandate. For instance, our armed forces have

effective programmes aimed at winning minds and hearts.

National ownership is essential in peacebuilding. This is not just a question of sovereignty; it is a functional matter. For instance, schools and clinics have on occasion been constructed by multiple agencies and non-governmental organizations in post-conflict situations, which later were found unsustainable, leading to duplication and waste. National ownership mitigates this. While the paper correctly points out the need for better operational coordination among international agencies on the ground, empowerment of Special Representatives of the Secretary-General is not necessarily the solution, especially if such concentration of authority is achieved at the expense of nascent national leadership, which is often an inevitable if unintended consequence. It is national ownership that must assess critical requirements and gaps and must share that assessment institutionally with those who have the ability to deliver on bridging those gaps. That would also help us respond to the problem posed by the inadequacy of international resources in helping to stabilize post-conflict countries when everything is urgent.

As for the planning and running of operations, including the international financial institutions, the Peacebuilding Commission has the mandate to bring together and mobilize all actors, especially in marshalling resources. Above all, it signals the commitment of the international community to the State concerned, unique as a hedge against political risk to private capital.

The Bretton Woods institutions need to be brought into an optimal agenda. They advised Cambodia to reduce its civil service by 20 per cent — after Pol Pot had already decimated it. The downsizing was apparently not enough for them. Four countries in Africa that collapsed into civil war had been, in the preceding ten years, 62 to 83 per cent under a programme of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Mining companies sometimes leave next to nothing to Governments for spending on social infrastructure. IMF pressure to privatize makes such imbalanced contracting more likely. It would be useful for the World Bank or another expert body to develop model auction procedures and model contracts.

The concept paper touches upon factors that hamper efforts of the United Nations and the international community in country. The United Nations contractual system needs to be streamlined and conditions of service of the Secretariat staff in the field harmonized with those of funds and programmes in order to get and retain personnel of better quality.

The concept paper outlines the need to establish a rapidly deployable civilian capacity. That idea must be elaborated through open, inclusive and transparent negotiations in order to give the end result greater legitimacy. India hopes to participate fully in discussing this concept, which holds the promise of a new paradigm of cooperation between developed and developing States. Once the concept is fully elaborated, recruitment of those who can deploy the appropriate talents, skills and technologies would greatly help in peacebuilding.

In conclusion, I would like to underline our support for the notion that post-conflict peace consolidation remains one of the most serious challenges that the United Nations faces collectively. However, we cannot produce more creative and flexible approaches to address that challenge unless we are willing to move beyond fixed positions. Outside these walls, the world sees only one United Nations, not its constituent organs or Member States. Our effort must therefore be based on a more collective and inclusive approach, one that justifies the first word of the title: the United Nations.

The President: Thank you very much, Sir, for that very thoughtful statement and the focus on integration.

Before giving the floor to the next speaker, may I note that we have 12 more speakers on the list. The interpreters have kindly agreed to continue past 6 o'clock, but I encourage remaining speakers to stick to the limit set at the beginning; that would be very helpful.

The next speaker is the representative of Honduras, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Reina Idiaquez (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): Before beginning my statement I would like to express, on behalf of Honduras, the most sincere sense of solidarity with the Governments and peoples of Myanmar and China at the recent loss of human lives caused by natural disasters in those countries.

First, I wish to convey to the presidency the appreciation of my delegation for convening this timely special meeting of the Security Council to focus on post-conflict reconstruction. Holding these open meetings on a regular basis is a step forward in the search for transparency and equality of opportunity for delegations to participate in the work of this important organ of our Organization. It should be an example to follow.

This meeting, an initiative of the United Kingdom, is an essential step in our discussions about the Council and the need to reform and expand it and, more than anything, to become aware of the fact that currently, peacekeeping operations authorized by the Council must always include political, economic, social and humanitarian components so that the local problems can be tackled after all hostilities have ceased.

Reconstruction in post-conflict situations is indispensable to avoid a return to deplorable situations of armed conflict. My country, Honduras, at the heart of the Americas, after turbulent events in the Central American region that have fortunately receded into the past, finds itself a democracy with regional institutions for economic, political and social integration. The Central American Integration System, the Central American Parliament, the Central American Bank for Economic Integration and the Central American Court of Justice are among the most relevant. All that has been achieved after many meetings and discussions at the regional level, which led to the institutionalization of Central American summits, which are held quite often to resolve the most important problems in the region. Honduras has made Central American integration its standard, and today we wish to contribute with our message to the experiences acquired.

Central America has the most comprehensive experience of successes when it comes to organizing peace, because the United Nations set up the Observer Group in Central America, the Observer Mission to Verify the Electoral Process in Nicaragua, the Observer Mission in El Salvador and the Verification Mission in Guatemala in the region in a continuous and thoroughgoing process, in full cooperation with the Governments of the region.

My delegation has accompanied all recent reforms of the international architecture undertaken under the guidance of the United Nations and the proposals of the Secretary-General, so now the Peacebuilding Commission is a reality, the Human Rights Council is operating, and the special missions of the Economic and Social Council are contributing to improving the prospects for resolving and preventing domestic conflict and, further, making it possible to take the necessary measures to help the local populations to avoid new outbursts of violence.

It is precisely in preventing conflict that one finds the best response to conflict. Military peacekeeping operations per se are not so complex if we compare them to the problems that remain in various States and regions after an armed conflict.

Today we are facing greater challenges with the current energy and food crises and the disruptions of nature caused by the serious alterations of climate change. My country recognizes the proposals in the concept paper prepared by the United Kingdom for consideration and analysis (S/2008/291, annex). It contains elements of great value that require more and better discussion. The proposals must be viewed in a holistic manner, along with the concepts in the Brahimi report on peace operations (S/2000/809). We should also take into consideration the earlier resolutions of this Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council that deal with humanitarian and social affairs.

Any crisis will come with many perspectives and facets, and the analysis of a crisis must examine problems such as social inequality, massive violations of human rights, lack of political participation, racial discrimination, economic disparities and racial segregation. These are just some of the elements that generate armed national conflicts and transcend international borders when they provoke a flow of refugees.

Honduras considers that the Millennium Development Goals are an indispensable tool for averting conflict, and that is why we appeal to the international community — in particular, what are called the industrialized countries — to become aware of their international responsibility for eradicating extreme poverty and hunger in the world.

Millions of people in the world live on less than one dollar per day. They are the first to feel the deadly impact of the "silent tsunami", as some have called the food crisis caused by the sudden rise in the prices of

food commodities. The world experienced a dramatic increase in food prices in the first quarter of 2008, and in real terms the prices of staple foods reached peaks unheard of in three decades. This crisis will exacerbate world poverty and malnutrition, so we must improve coordination and increase the preventive and response capacity of Governments and international bodies.

Innovative alternatives must be found to enhance the establishment of integrated peace operations for the benefit of humankind. The international community cannot continue to ignore the pleas of the world's dispossessed and to attempt to solve its problems using military means as a priority, when the causes of those problems are social and humanitarian.

The President: I thank the representative of Honduras for sharing conclusions drawn from his own country's experience, as well as for highlighting the Economic and Social Council debate on food security.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. Argüello (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all let me congratulate the United Kingdom presidency on the way it has been guiding the Security Council debate during the month of May. At the same time, I thank you, Madam President, for the timely convening of this open debate on a theme of great importance at the present time, a theme on which your country plays a leadership role.

My country considers that United Nations and, in particular, the Security Council have a key responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security. Likewise, the Organization has a crucial role to play in post-conflict peacebuilding in laying the foundation for sustainable peace and development.

One of the greatest challenges facing the international community and the United Nations is to support States in recovering from conflict and building sustainable peace. An effective response by the Organization requires the preparation of a broad, coordinated strategy, based on identifying priorities and setting specific goals and time frames. This task requires many kinds of activities: political, security, rule of law, humanitarian, development and the defence of and respect for human rights.

In that stage of preparing a broad strategy and identifying the priorities, we emphasize the importance of national ownership: the participation and responsibility of the authorities of the country emerging from conflict, which should be involved throughout the reconstruction process in order to ensure an agreed response that can address the root causes of a conflict with greater legitimacy and effectiveness.

My country welcomes the work of the Peacebuilding Commission as an advisory body on the coordination of all international activities and resources aimed at post-conflict stabilization. It plays a crucial role in coordinating national authorities and all other actors involved in reconstruction and development, including United Nations bodies and agencies, international financial institutions, civil society and the private sector. We believe that the role of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund should be enhanced.

My delegation also wishes to highlight the important role of regional and subregional organizations in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and the need to strengthen the capacities of regional arrangements in helping countries to recover and rebuild after a conflict.

I wish in conclusion to repeat once more what we have said before in this Chamber: that Argentina is convinced of the Organization's responsibility in supporting countries recovering from conflict — together with their national authorities and in collaboration with regional arrangements and other actors — in order to rebuild and strengthen their institutions and to avoid forever the recurrence of a conflict scenario.

The President: I thank the representative of Argentina for his very well considered and thoughtful intervention.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Papua New Guinea.

Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea): I thank you, Madam President, for convening this important meeting on a subject that continues to challenge all of us in one way or another. I also wish the United Kingdom all the very best during the remainder of its term as President of the Council.

On 16 June 2005, the Security Council wound up the seven-year-old United Nations mandate which had overseen the resolution of the bloody 10-year civil conflict which had raged on the island of Bougainville in Papua New Guinea. Sadly, it is estimated that between 10,000 and 15,000 — and maybe more — people, including women and children, lost their lives in a national tragedy that could have been avoidable.

A few months earlier, between 20 May and 9 June 2005, the first general elections for the President and members of the House of Representatives had been held to form the Autonomous Bougainville Government. That historic election had been made possible under constitutional arrangements agreed between the Government of Papua New Guinea and the leaders of Bougainville. The United Nations was also a critical part of that process.

The agreed constitutional arrangements also allows for the devolution of powers in areas such as land, the judiciary, finance, transportation and communications, to name but a few. The powers relating to defence and foreign affairs continue to remain national functions. Uniquely, the same constitutional arrangements provide for a referendum to be held amongst the people of Bougainville within 15 years of the election of the first Autonomous Bougainville Government.

To some extent the three points raised in paragraph 2 of the excellent concept paper from the United Kingdom Mission (S/2008/291, annex) had been met when the United Nations mandate was wound up. Those points are, first, rapid implementation of the peace agreement to maintain the commitment of the parties; secondly, the re-establishment of stability and the rule of law; and, finally, a demonstrable improvement to the lives of the local people.

The overall involvement of the United Nations during the mandate, although small in both manpower and budget, was very effective. One element that the United Nations was able to bring during the formulation of the peace process was an independent perspective, which assisted all the parties to agree on critical aspects of how the peace process was to be structured.

A very strong regional dimension, especially the involvement of our immediate neighbours in the Pacific, contributed strongly to the success of the peace process. By the time the United Nations mandate was wound up, countries such as Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu, Samoa and the Solomon Islands had assisted in some way or another, with major logistical support provided by both Australia and New Zealand, which enabled the maintenance of all personnel on the ground in Bougainville. Japan also assisted.

Added to this, the critical political support from both the Government of Papua New Guinea and the leaders of Bougainville was also an important aspect. Over the life of the United Nations mandate, three successive Papua New Guinea Governments affirmed that the resolution of the Bougainville conflict was critical to the stability of Papua New Guinea and thus saw it as a bipartisan imperative. In the end, this continued strong commitment saw the required amendment to the Papua New Guinea constitution to effect the Bougainville peace process overwhelmingly supported by the national parliament.

The current situation is that, as we move towards the third anniversary of the dissolution of the United Nations mandate over Bougainville, next month, the peace process continues. Political commitment at the highest levels of our Government continues. The civil service and senior officials on both sides continue to maintain, within the framework of joint meetings, the process of steady devolution of powers under the constitutional arrangement. The people of Bougainville have also taken part in the national election process, the most recent being during the middle of last year. Our regional partners continue to assist us in areas such as police training, and the United Nations, through its agencies, continues to deliver in various areas, such as girls' education.

The national Government continues to provide for Bougainville in its annual budget.

That said, it seems the more critical issue here is the third point covered in the concept paper: that of "a demonstrable improvement to the lives of local people" (S/2008/291, annex, paragraph 2). I would suggest that this point presents a potential gap that could hamper national, regional and international efforts.

The situation on the ground on Bougainville remains one that requires constant vigilance and attention. The danger is that recurring incidents of minor violence always have the potential to provoke larger acts of violence that could lead to wider instability. We have seen instances and signs of this in the last three years. Fortunately, the incidents have

been contained so far. So the connection between the need to maintain focus on reintegrating ex-combatants and the need to assist the wider community in developing a range of skills, especially vocational skills, is an important focus area.

It is important to underline the importance of a gender perspective in the process of post-conflict peacebuilding. There is a global consensus that a gender perspective is critical in the development agenda; so too it would seem critical in the conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes. Much of Bougainville is matrilineal. When the women of Bougainville were re-empowered, the peace process could be better facilitated. Perhaps the toolkit of response measures for conflict resolution and peacebuilding should include a realization that local customs and traditions must be better understood.

We support the position of the Non-Aligned Movement on the functionality of the Peacebuilding Commission, and we seek the Commission's support in assisting us in strengthening the peacebuilding process on Bougainville, in Papua New Guinea.

The President: I thank the representative of Papua New Guinea for his statement and for highlighting his country's experience. I now have pleasure in giving the floor to the representative of Georgia.

Mr. Alasania (Georgia): At the outset, let me express my condolences to the families of victims of the tragedies caused by the natural disasters in China and Myanmar.

I would like to extend our gratitude to the United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations for the excellent opportunity afforded us to address this crucial issue.

Georgia aligns itself with the statement made by the Slovenian representative on behalf of European Union.

Georgia considers the Peacebuilding Commission, in close cooperation with the other main United Nations bodies, as the most important instrument in the field of peacebuilding, post-conflict rehabilitation and stabilization. As a member of the newly established body, Georgia is looking forward to the implementation of the strategic frameworks in those respective fields.

As we are discussing comprehensive issues related to post-conflict peacebuilding, allow me to contribute with observations based on experience gained during 15 years of hosting peacekeeping operations in Abkhazia, Georgia.

We believe that a strong peacekeeping operation has to be supported by solid law enforcement and security elements in order to create the secure environment necessary for ensuring the normal rhythm of life. We refer to the impartial international civilian law enforcement elements, which can effectively restore law and order and ensure the dignified and safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their homes.

For more than a decade now, we have been witnessing that most of the objectives of the current peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia, Georgia have not been achieved. Clearly, our experience seriously calls into question the rationale of having an immediate neighbour country serving as the dominant peacekeeper in the conflict. In our case, the gradual shift from a military peacekeeping operation to an international police operation with capabilities for addressing threats to security and stability is inevitable. We assume that the role of an effective international police force should include anti-crime patrols, investigation of crimes and human rights violations and the training of local police forces.

We are confident that efficient conflict resolution in Abkhazia, Georgia requires the appropriate enlargement and enforcement of the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), especially in the field of law enforcement activities. Together with operational functions, the new mandate should allow the civilian police to supervise, guide and train joint local police forces to enforce the law effectively and impartially. The primary goal of the international civilian police is to restore law and order and assist national institutions while maintaining full respect for the host country's sovereignty.

Based on our experience, the blueprint for a successful peacekeeping operation includes impartiality guaranteed by wider international representation and solid collective international efforts to ensure the operation's responsiveness to the changes on the ground.

The President: I thank the representative of Georgia for his statement and for his account of

Georgia's own experiences. I now have pleasure in giving the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Kim Bong-Hyun (Republic of Korea): Let me join previous speakers in thanking the presidency of the United Kingdom for organizing this open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of my delegation to convey our sincere condolences to the peoples of China and Myanmar for their suffering due to the recent natural disasters.

My delegation would like to underline the successful operation of the Peacebuilding Commission's three country-specific meetings, on Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. My delegation commends the Commission for addressing the challenges of post-conflict peacebuilding and development simultaneously, which we believe will contribute to solving the root cause of the recurrent nature of conflicts. We also appreciate the Commission for bringing all relevant actors together into a single forum to develop peacebuilding strategies for post-conflict countries. In this regard, my delegation hopes the Commission's working method will be further developed so that more post-conflict countries will benefit from its valuable work.

To ensure the Peacebuilding Commission's comprehensive approach and maximize its synergistic effects, my delegation would like to stress the importance of communication among the United Nations, its field missions and Member States. The United Nations should play a central role in maintaining such triangular communication so that Member States are fully informed and remain connected to the field. That approach will enable us to collect the best available peacebuilding experiences and secure future participation from Member States.

There is no doubt that strong and effective leadership in the United Nations field missions is necessary to meet the need for more coordinated peacebuilding efforts. On that note, my delegation would like to commend the Security Council for its creation of an integrated field office with peacebuilding mandates in Sierra Leone through its resolutions 1620 (2005), 1734 (2006) and 1793 (2007). My delegation supports the Security Council in the extension of peacebuilding mandates to other United Nations field missions and their heads.

The peacebuilding strategies recommended by the Commission cannot be accomplished without sufficient funds. My delegation reiterates that as the Commission fulfils its mandates and proves its worth, Member States will recognize its achievements by increasing their contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund. However, the Fund is designed to cover initial financial needs of post-conflict countries, and the international community should consider how to effectively help those countries in financing their long-term peacebuilding needs. My delegation would like to advance its view that the United Nations should first develop a standing contact mechanism with international financial institutions with a view to facilitating the mobilization of peacebuilding funds.

Non-financial contributions such as technical assistance for capacity-building in a post-conflict country should also be considered a necessary resource for peacebuilding. The United Nations should not spare its efforts to make non-financial contributions available at the locations where they are needed. In this regard, my delegation would like to see the Organization further develop its partnerships with regional organizations and civil society in order to allow them to be fully engaged with peacebuilding efforts. Their role would be even more critical in ensuring rapidly deployable and skilled civilian capacity for real field work.

Finally, national ownership should be highlighted to avoid moral hazards and solidify post-conflict peacebuilding efforts on the ground. In that context, we believe that the United Nations should encourage and strengthen a national Government to actively participate in the process of recovery and reconstruction of its own post-conflict nation.

The Republic of Korea is willing to contribute to the world's peacebuilding efforts and the further development of the peacebuilding activities of the United Nations. It is our sincere hope that the United Nations will continue its considerable success and facilitate peace throughout the world.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Serbia.

Mr. Jevremović (Serbia): Serbia welcomes the debate on post-conflict peacebuilding.

Before I proceed to make my statement, I would like to point out that Serbia has aligned itself with the

statement made by the Representative of the Republic of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union.

Also, I would like to present the views of my country based on its experience in respect of the subject of our debate today, which can be useful in identifying the critical gaps that hamper international efforts to stabilize post-conflict countries and to build sustainable peace.

By and large, today's conflicts are caused by ethnicity and religion and are often exacerbated by social and economic antagonisms. Solutions to violent conflicts always necessitate a complex process with an uncertain outcome.

Reconciliation is a critical aspect of post-conflict peacebuilding. Nowadays, the United Nations plays a vital role in that process, especially in creating conditions necessary for reconciliation. Ethnic conflicts are a cause of population displacement, of which the worst aspect is ethnic cleansing. Therefore, the safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) can be taken as a yardstick of the reconciliation process. The return of property and compensation are equally important. In our own experience, especially in the case of the province of Kosovo and Metohija, the results of the rehabilitation and IDP returns are very disappointing. The rehabilitation of refugees from conflicts in other parts of the former Yugoslavia is equally discouraging. If those problems are not addressed properly, reconciliation and peacebuilding will remain uncertain.

The essential framework for the rehabilitation of post-conflict countries is respect for human rights, particularly those of minorities and other disfavoured communities. The indispensable dimension of respect for human rights is the rule of law. That is of paramount importance for lasting peace and stability, whereas its absence is a great threat to conflict resurgence.

The rule of law in today's world, characterized by a process of globalization and unprecedented integration, has an international dimension as well. To be more specific, it means full respect for the United Nations Charter and other international legal standards that guarantee equality and mutual respect among States and their sovereignty and integrity. In the past, the arbitrary redrawing of national borders and the recomposition of territories have generated unprecedented violence and tragedies. The recent experiences of our region provide ample evidence in that regard.

However, the simple truth is that the redistribution of territory cannot be substituted for human rights and the rule of law. Of late, we have been repeatedly told that the unilateral declaration of independence of the province of Kosovo and Metohija is the final act of the dismemberment of Yugoslavia. In essence, that original notion amounts to diverting the issue and sweeping the problem under the carpet. After all, the story of the tragedy that followed the dismemberment of Yugoslavia is yet to be told. However, if we have learned anything from that bitter experience, we, the countries of the region, should spare no effort to be admitted under the secure European roof.

Regional organizations play an ever more important role in peacebuilding. However, their role must not run counter to the role and the primary responsibility of the United Nations for safeguarding international peace and security. Furthermore, there has to be not a modicum of doubt that a Security Council decision must underpin each and every activity of regional organizations. That conforms to my country's position on the European Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, the European Union mission to Kosovo and Metohija, an extremely important project that requires very careful elaboration firmly embedded in the United Nations monitoring and decision-making process.

Several years ago, Mr. Kofi Annan, the then Secretary-General of the United Nations, said in his report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration that the international community "can ill-afford to declare victory prematurely". Indeed, post-conflict societies are unstable and early positive results should not justify an early reduction or withdrawal of international presences. A change in the scope of the engagement of international actors must be carried out only on the basis of an objective, consensual and realistic assessment of the capacity of local actors to assume the functions of those presences. The role of the United Nations in those processes, let me reiterate, is and remains indispensable.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of El Salvador.

Mrs. Gallardo Hernández (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): El Salvador welcomes your initiative, Madam, to convene this open debate of the Security

Council to consider the question of post-conflict peacebuilding.

One result of the 2005 World Summit was that our heads of State and Government agreed on the importance of overcoming the lack of coherence in the global vision that comprises the various phases of action taken by the international community to promote peacekeeping, peacebuilding and the transition towards development. Thus, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office are today the core elements of the new United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

During the past two years of the Commission's existence, El Salvador has made every effort to contribute, in its capacity as Vice-Chair and in the coordination of the Working Group on Lessons Learned, to strengthening the Commission as an advisory body to the Security Council and the General Assembly in the field of post-conflict peacebuilding. That new architecture has generated great expectations among the various players in the international community, in particular among countries in and emerging from conflict, since the Commission offers hope for better understanding of the goals and targets that underpin peacebuilding activities in each specific case.

We acknowledge with satisfaction that the Peacebuilding Commission is exercising solid and significant leadership in the field, motivating the participation and inclusion of national actors, particularly those that play a key role in the peacebuilding decision-making process, thereby supporting the formulation of strategic frameworks for peacebuilding in each specific case. In that respect, we stress the Commission's active and responsible position in promoting the pillars that anchor collective security and well-being: peace, security, development and human rights.

In view of the foregoing, the Commission should be allowed to continue developing a comprehensive vision that will strengthen the coherence of the United Nations system on the ground while contributing to a better understanding by the Member States of the complex multidimensional factors involved in peacekeeping. El Salvador believes it essential for the Commission to continue to deepen its experiences in a comprehensive manner.

We welcome the fact that an inclusive agreement was reached on the peacebuilding strategies for Burundi and Sierra Leone and that progress continues in the exchange of experiences on factors that have contributed to conflicts in other parts of the world, through the study and assimilation of lessons learned and the thematic debates that we have held.

In that regard, allow me to recall the importance of strengthening cohesion among the peacebuilding goals and strategies, with the available resources for the attainment of those goals. From that perspective, the added value generated by the Commission is to be found in its very composition.

El Salvador agrees on the importance of recognizing that the raison d'être of the Commission must not be limited to the mobilization of financial resources for peacebuilding processes. It is also essential to go beyond that perspective to understand that the complexity of conflicts requires multidisciplinary action and a comprehensive medium- and long-term vision that will motivate the participation of all stakeholders in those processes.

The proposed quick-impact programmes must not lead us to lose sight of the fact that what truly matters is that the social fabric of a country emerging from conflict is repaired in a climate of reconciliation and peace, while taking the first steps towards development. As we have said, institution-building is the basic responsibility of national stakeholders, and it must be one of the main long-term achievements of the Peacebuilding Commission.

El Salvador, as a country that has made the transition from conflict to development, has sought, since it joined the Commission, to share its experiences, to understand the new realities and to seek innovative mechanisms that will help the countries under consideration: Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. Allow me to reiterate that El Salvador is prepared to share the practices and experiences of those who contributed to the transition to peace and allowed us to lay the foundations for good governance and the rule of law in our country.

In conclusion, in our view, the Commission has made a difference in the countries under consideration. Other countries, such as my own, were not able, 15 years ago, to benefit from the existence of the Commission and had to deal with a great many challenges in the transition from conflict to

peacebuilding and development. That is why we are immensely pleased with the holding of this debate. We urge the Security Council to continue to support the work of the Commission and to strengthen the new peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations.

The President: I thank the representative of El Salvador for her ideas for follow-up for the Peacebuilding Commission.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Qatar.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): First, Madam, I would like to congratulate you on your delegation's successful presidency of the Security Council and on having selected this important topic as a basis for today's discussion. I would also like to commend the Secretariat's efforts in support of peacebuilding.

I associate myself with the statement made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Security Council's debate on peacebuilding centres on the role that the Council can play in conflict or post-conflict environments in the maintenance of international peace and security — in keeping, of course, with its mandate — including by authorizing multidimensional missions. We encourage coordination with the General Assembly and other relevant organs on peacebuilding and development.

The 2005 World Summit decided to establish the Peacebuilding Commission as an advisory body to both the General Assembly and the Security Council. Therefore, when the Council addresses issues of peacebuilding and development or the role and mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission, it is essential to coordinate those efforts with the Assembly, which established the Commission under its resolution 60/180, in parallel with Security Council resolution 1645 (2005). The Council is not in a position to assume alone the responsibility for long-term peacebuilding, given the scope and complexity of peacebuilding, which extends beyond threats to international peace and security. Post-conflict peacebuilding has thus become a multidimensional issue that requires concerted efforts by all United Nations agencies and partnerships with the international community based on national ownership and full respect for the sovereignty of the State in question, in accordance with the principles of the Charter and international law. Those principles are stipulated in the mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The first year of the peacebuilding architecture that emerged from the 2005 World Summit witnessed the launching of the Peacebuilding Support Office within the Secretariat and of the Peacebuilding Fund, which provides funding for many development projects. Much progress has been achieved with regard to the organizational and procedural aspects of the Commission's work. We should therefore continue to build on the progress achieved thus far, such as the concrete results achieved on the ground in Burundi, Sierra Leone and, more recently, Guinea-Bissau.

More States must benefit from peacebuilding programmes, while due consideration must be paid to the differing conditions of each situation — and hence to the differing ways in which the peacebuilding process should be managed in different countries. Countries emerging from conflict must also have full national ownership of their peacebuilding process in a manner that serves the interests of their peoples. In accordance with the principle of sovereignty, their voluntary approval must be sought on programmes implemented within their borders, especially since those States have themselves sought the support of the international community.

It is imperative to formulate a United Nations exit strategy from post-conflict countries: countries emerging from conflict cannot remain on the United Nations agenda forever. Coordination with the State concerned is needed to develop a comprehensive development and capacity-building strategy, including an education strategy to teach young people about the culture of peace. We cannot expect a State to be in a position to achieve sustainable development without building its production capacity and without enabling it to enjoy economic and political independence. The role of the United Nations should therefore not be understood as that of an open-ended aid provider, but rather as that of a builder of sustainable projects. Relationships with international partners or United Nations missions should not be defined on a financial basis alone.

We regret that the Council is still unable to make use of Chapter VIII of the Charter with regard to cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations and bodies, especially in

the adoption of Council resolutions involving collaboration between the United Nations and other organizations. During our membership of the Security Council, we long stressed the need to adopt such resolutions under Chapter VIII of the Charter so as not to sideline the role that the regional arrangements could play.

We hope that we have contributed to developing some ideas. It would be useful for the report of the Secretary-General called for in the draft presidential statement to include a positive clarification of these ideas and practical recommendations, in partnership with the General Assembly and other relevant organs of the United Nations.

The President: I thank the representative of Qatar for his focus on development of capacity and on regional arrangements.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Norway.

Mr. Løvald (Norway): I shall limit my remarks, and the full text of my statement will be circulated.

There is a need to recognize the critical importance of gaining a coherent understanding of recovery interventions and successful peacebuilding. The United Nations, its Member States and other international actors need to change their modes of operation in order to address the special needs of countries that are in, emerging from or affected by conflict. That is all the more true as peacebuilding becomes an integral part of our common United Nations agenda.

I want to focus on three issues.

First, with respect to leadership, it is important to remind ourselves that one of the key lessons from the Brahimi report is that failure is inevitable when peacekeeping becomes a substitute for facing painful the political compromises that are needed from all sides to achieve sustainable peace.

One of the findings from a project on multidimensional and integrated peace operations that Norway initiated in 2006 was the need to get a clear view of what needs to be achieved politically. That could assist in making the necessary distinction between humanitarian assistance in emergencies and the need for long-term recovery efforts. It requires the Secretary-General to take on a stronger role in guiding efforts inside the United Nations system, forging incentives for better coherence and integration.

Peacebuilding is not a sequential process; it needs to be looked at as a highly interlinked series of simultaneous activities. It is also important to speed up efforts in that regard, bringing on board all stakeholders — including the international financial institutions, donors and national counterparts to the countries concerned — to make sure that all are aware of what is to be expected, delivered, how it is to be delivered and by whom.

It is critical to ensure that the senior United Nations representative in the field has at her or his disposal a clear and robust mandate. The United Nations representative also needs to be backed by a strong and integrated leadership team. Member States need to adapt and change the current frameworks that guide both the administrative and budgeting processes. Today, success often depends on the personal capabilities of senior United Nations mission leaders to find ways of manoeuvring around the system, rather than as a result of it.

There is a need to address how to ensure more predictable and sustainable sources of funding. The current system for financing multidimensional peace operations does not allow for the adequate resourcing of multidimensional mandates with strong peacebuilding and recovery components. We need to think about how to create more organic links between assessed and voluntary funding sources.

Secondly, with respect to the peacebuilding architecture, the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in taking on an even stronger proactive and convening role in promoting better system coherence and integration should be examined. While the Commission has had a great deal of success in the past year, we still have a way to go to ensure effective coordination within the United Nations and with other partners. Norway, for its part, has been honoured to chair the Commission's efforts regarding Burundi, a country in need of even greater international attention and support.

As more countries are included on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda, we will have to take a closer look at its working methods. The focus will increasingly have to be country-specific in each particular case, relying on tailor-made approaches and always focusing on policy impact.

We agree with the Secretary-General that the evolution of the peacebuilding architecture constitutes a significant innovation in the ability of the United Nations to help countries in, emerging from or affected by conflict. Thus we emphasize efforts to develop country-specific strategies that bring on board all stakeholders, including national partners, and define responsibilities in line with both national and international programming objectives. Those frameworks are not academic exercises; they are essential tools in providing added value.

Thirdly, on civilian capabilities, an existing deficit of readily qualified and deployable civilian capabilities should be addressed in greater depth as a complement to increased emphasis on national ownership. That requires putting in place conditions and training systems that will sufficiently prepare them for operating in a multidimensional and integrated mission framework in countries that require robust recovery efforts. It also requires taking advantage of national rosters that can be rapidly deployed. But to repeat, that must be done to empower national authorities further, not to replace them.

There is a need to bridge the current security, development and humanitarian planning frameworks in order to effectively address the complex challenges at hand. We believe that this meeting is a critical starting point in providing the Secretary-General and the United Nations system with an endorsement of progress made so far, as well as providing the political incentives to further strengthen the implementation of the various reform initiatives in order to better assist countries emerging from or affected by conflict and to prevent a relapse by building sustainable peace.

The President: I thank the representative of Norway for his ideas for follow-up.

I now have the pleasure of giving the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Hill (Australia): I would like to thank the United Kingdom for holding this important debate.

How best to address post-conflict and post-crisis stabilization has been something Australia has been working on for some years now, be it in our role in the International Stabilization Force in Timor-Leste, in the regional assistance mission to the Solomon Islands, or in Bougainville, which was referred to in some detail by my friend the Ambassador of Papua New Guinea. We do not pretend to have all the answers, but we have learnt a number of lessons similar to those that the United Kingdom has drawn together. In many ways those lessons are obvious ones, but even simple truths bear repeating.

The speed and strength of an initial response are of the essence. Following any conflict or crisis, there may be a limited window of opportunity to consolidate peace and commence rebuilding on a sound foundation, in cooperation with national authorities. Similarly, quick military intervention is at times the best way to save lives. The quick deployments by ourselves, Malaysia, New Zealand and Portugal in May 2006 to Timor-Leste at the request of its Government demonstrated that. The same principle applies to police deployments.

We need the same flexibility and preparedness for other civilian elements, although in our case we would not look to maintain a large, multidisciplinary team on a just-in-case basis; for us, we take a just-in-time approach using teams drawn on a case-by-case basis from both our national and State levels of Government and subject matter experts from the wider Australian community. But we look forward to hearing more from the United Kingdom as it develops its deployable civilian capability.

Demonstrating to a population that security has been restored is the first step. That demonstration is made tangible by a full re-establishment of the rule of law, transitional justice and quick development outcomes. To achieve those, we need to ensure that we are drawing on the full range of our own expertise.

In that regard, Australia is establishing the Asia-Pacific Centre for Civil-Military Cooperation as an essential part of our commitment to regional stability and development. The Centre will focus on supporting a coherent national capability to assess, plan for and implement integrated peacebuilding, stabilization, reconstruction and international disaster relief operations.

It is important to build up not just our own capacities, but also those of others. It is obvious to say this, but it would always be preferable to have built up capacities before a crisis than to act as a substitute afterwards. To that end, our Federal Police is the first police force to conduct United Nations-recognized predeployment training that meets the requirements for United Nations peace operations.

No matter how good international assistance may be, if it does not serve the national needs of the country concerned, there is little point in providing it. Our help must build up national institutions and leaders. And the sooner we can back local authorities in reassuming full responsibility, the better chance there will be of a sustainable solution. The importance of diplomatic efforts alongside security and development engagement must also be recognized. We should ensure that diplomacy is used to stronger effect, particularly in situations where skilled diplomatic negotiations may prevent a relapse into conflict.

The United Nations clearly has an important role in promoting post-conflict and post-crisis stabilization. We would welcome further advice from the Secretary-General on how the Organization's contribution in this area could be strengthened.

The President: I thank the representative of Australia for his intervention and for offering lessons learned from Australia's own experience.

I now call on the representative of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): We thank you, Madam President, for organizing this debate as well as for producing a concept paper. This debate comes at an opportune moment. The demand for peacekeeping has reached an unprecedented scale and it is certainly timely for the United Nations membership to take a look at the activities it undertakes after conflicts have ended. The increase in costs for peacekeeping operations certainly entails the risk that the resources necessary for post-conflict peacebuilding may not be made available.

Today we are not, of course, discussing a new topic — quite the opposite. The presidency's concept paper illustrates this. It quotes from the Brahimi report published in the year 2000 (S/2000/809), and it is quite appropriate that Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi was invited to address the Council today. We very much appreciated his presentation this morning, which focused strongly on very practical aspects of post-conflict peacebuilding and, of course, on his first-hand experience. His comments deserve particular attention, especially on the need to create national and local ownership, and to rely, therefore, to the fullest extent possible, on human resources in those countries where peacebuilding activities are undertaken.

The fact that some parts of the Brahimi report have still not been implemented after all these years illustrates the fact that progress in this area has been slow. Nevertheless, it has been steady, and it has received an important boost through the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, which has turned out to be one of the most important results of the 2005 World Summit. The work that the Commission has carried out so far has clearly had positive effects, and we hope that its potential can be fully explored in the future. In particular, it should be able to consider situations immediately after a conflict has ended and a ceasefire or peace accord has entered into force. In addition, it must be understood that post-conflict peacebuilding is always also a tool for conflict prevention and there should be an exchange of best practices from both fields.

One feature of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission that merits increased attention and further consideration is its practice of considering situations in various configurations in order to ensure optimal inclusion of the stakeholders. That is a very interesting formula that could perhaps also be successfully applied to the work of the Security Council itself.

The rule of law plays a central role in the stabilization of countries and societies in post-conflict situations. It is our hope that the Rule of Law Unit, whose establishment required much more time than we had expected, will play a positive role in that respect. Efforts by the United Nations to secure the rule of law over the long term can be successful only if they tap extensively into local and national capacities and if they expand expertise in all relevant areas.

In addition, increased attention must be given to transitional justice needs, if and where they exist. The international community has accumulated extensive experience and expertise on that issue in recent years and has developed various models and modalities to satisfy transitional justice needs. The International Criminal Court can play a particular role in that regard, and we hope that it will be given the required political support, including by the Security Council. In particular, the Council has to recognize that the principles of peace and justice are complementary, mutually reinforcing and, in combination, form an indispensable ingredient of post-conflict peacebuilding.

The presidency's concept paper identifies rapid and flexible funding as a major challenge. At a time of

rapidly increasing costs for peacekeeping, that challenge is likely to be exacerbated in the near future. Since peacebuilding is a form of conflict prevention, it can in principle be very cost-effective. However, experience — such as the examples given in the concept paper — has shown that little or no money may be available during the initial phase after a conflict, when it is most needed and when the direction for the future process is set. Even though the activities are very different in nature, it would appear that there is some similarity, in terms of the funding dynamic, to the humanitarian work of the Organization. Therefore, funding mechanisms designed following the example of the Central Emergency Response Fund — which has served the purposes of humanitarian assistance quite well — seem to be worth exploring.

The President: I thank the representative of Liechtenstein for that very thoughtful intervention and for highlighting justice issues.

I now call on the representative of Benin.

Mr. Zinsou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): My delegation expresses its condolences to China and Myanmar on the disasters that have so gravely affected them. We also associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

My delegation congratulates you, Madam, on your country's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. We welcome the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom, which lends particular dignity to this meeting. It is proof — as if that were needed — of your country's commitment to United Nations activities in the area of peacebuilding and to strengthening the Commission established to promote it.

The Peacebuilding Commission provides a forum not only for consultation and coordination, but also for reflection to come up with integrated strategies setting out priorities for coherent support to be provided to countries emerging from conflict. In that regard, the Commission can help the Security Council define, in direct dialogue with the parties to peace agreements, the configurations of missions to be deployed and of integrated mandates likely to promote synergies for coherent action on the ground.

The Working Group established by the Commission to capitalize on lessons learned can play an effective role in that context. The Commission can enter into contact with national actors, regional organizations, bilateral and multilateral partners and interested civil society actors so as to put in place coherent support programmes aimed at helping prevent a relapse into conflict and putting the country concerned back on the path towards peace.

Mandates can no longer be established without such prior consultation. Once the mandates have been defined, the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General should fully utilize their influence and the civil and military means at their disposal to ensure that the parties participate in good faith in normalization processes.

The United Nations should help countries to mobilize the expertise that is needed to establish the institutions to meet national needs. If a critical mass of human resources is lacking in the country, then one should call on the diaspora. Nationals should be put back in charge who can work together with United Nations experts on defining recovery processes. In order to play its role as guarantor of universal norms, the United Nations must develop the competent and neutral international expertise to meet technical assistance needed in post-conflict situations.

In the specific area of security sector reform, the United Nations should increase its operational capacity, drawing up rosters of experts standing by for deployment, with a certification system based on competencies defined in agreement with Member States. Particularly in the field of the police, the United Nations should develop partnerships with countries that have regional training centres so that their curricula can include material relevant to participation in integrated operations. Special attention should be given to those areas where it is a matter of re-establishing law-enforcement functions, since the whole State apparatus has to start working again so that the rule of law, which is crucial to normalization in all other areas of life, can be re-established.

My country, Benin, experienced a national crisis in the late 1980s. It was able to recover through a national initiative, but it could not have succeeded without the multifaceted support we received as we emerged from crisis. Our development partners agreed to pay civil servants so that the public services could resume. The transitional Government received substantial budgetary assistance and focused technical

assistance from bilateral and multilateral partners. This enabled us to revive the economy on a new basis and, above all, it enabled us to establish institutions that were effective in taking up the challenges facing us in the area of maintaining political stability and managing development efforts.

Especially in the political arena, as one Government democratically succeeded another, Benin acquired some expertise in the area of how to strengthen national institutions and manage the rule of law. We are ready to share our experience with other countries facing difficulties in that sphere. Indeed, we are already sharing our experiences within the International Organization of la Francophonie, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States.

One lesson learned from the experience of countries emerging from conflict is that lack of resources to consolidate achievements and the consequent inability to function are among the reasons for the failure of peace agreements. New institutions can be credible only if they are able to perform in a way that will command respect and establish their legitimacy in the eyes of the citizens. This, of course, means fully respecting human rights, establishing mechanisms that will ensure good governance, looking after those who have been victims and establishing transitional justice that reconciles the need to combat impunity with the aspirations for national reconciliation. Security sector and judicial reform are of paramount importance and should be given special attention and careful follow-up.

Another prerequisite for peacebuilding is having a peacetime economy replace the wartime economy by creating the conditions for the resumption of healthy economic activity, combating all kinds of trafficking and ensuring that the country can rejoin the world economy and move towards sustainable human development. This requires proper management of available resources, fair regulation of peaceful economic activities, whether it be the exploitation of natural resources or in the service sector.

In this connection, my delegation has always had reservations about long-term embargoes on the exploitation of the natural resources of countries emerging from conflict. The enormous need for financing for recovery and reconstruction can be met only if the domestic resources of the country are mobilized and transparently and sensibly used. Particularly in countries where inequitable distribution of income from the exploitation of natural resources was one of the causes of conflict, peace agreements must be crystal clear on the conditions for exploitation of natural resources and on the modalities of redistribution.

The international community should use its influence to help put in place agreed management machinery, as it did in the case of Liberia with the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme. The cooperation framework set up for the implementation of the Peacebuilding Fund's support to beneficiary countries must take account of the need to guide them quickly towards mobilizing their domestic resources so that they can make better use of the available outside assistance. The resources allocated by the Fund should give rise to catalytic activities that can later be assisted by financing from bilateral and multilateral partners and private-sector investment.

A third and last area that my delegation thinks is of paramount importance is establishing a culture of peace. This means the setting up of systems to identify and address problems that could undermine the national consensus — which means agreement on how to preserve the fabric and unity of the country. Government mediators have a role to play: they can help Governments to quickly defuse any disputes that may arise in the management of public affairs. In addition to a mediator, Benin now has a new body called the Office of the High Commissioner on Participatory Governance. This was established together with the United Nations Democracy Fund. Its job is to lead the national dialogue on substantive matters relating to national life and to seek agreed solutions.

Those are just a few examples of how to meet the need of every country emerging from conflict to find practical ways of peacefully resolving national disputes so that they can bolster their citizens' desire to live together in peace and strengthen national cohesion. This must involve all players in the life of the nation. Development partners should also offer the necessary support to the countries concerned.

The President: I thank the representative of Benin for that very well-considered intervention and for offering us some of his own experiences and thoughts on follow-up.

We have had a long but very good discussion today, and I would like to thank all delegations for their thoughtful and thought-provoking interventions. My thanks go also to the Secretary-General, the World Bank, the Foreign Ministry of Sierra Leone and Mr. Brahimi for their presentations.

I think we highlighted a wide-ranging set of themes that included, but were not necessarily limited to, national ownership, including, where appropriate, a role for the diaspora; inclusivity, including within United Nations institutions; security; mandates; development; regional and national experiences; the importance of coordination; the need for both quick responses and long-term sustainability; the importance of justice; resolution 1325 (2000); and the importance of getting adequate resources, among many others. We look forward to discussing these issues with colleagues, delegations and representatives in the appropriate various United Nations forums.

And, of course, we also heard today about food security, which has been taken forward by the Economic and Social Council.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and emphasizes the critical importance of post-conflict peacebuilding in laying the foundation for sustainable peace and development after the scourge of war.

"The Security Council recognizes that supporting States to recover from conflict and build sustainable peace is a major challenge facing the international community, and that an effective response requires political, security, humanitarian and development activities to be integrated and coherent, including in the first phase of integrated mission planning.

"The Security Council emphasizes the importance of national ownership and the primary responsibility of national authorities emerging from conflict for peacebuilding and sustainable development, expresses its intention to support those efforts and encourages other actors to do the same.

"The Security Council recalls its resolution 1645 (2005) and welcomes the work of the Peacebuilding Commission in advising on the coordination of international peacebuilding activities and resources, and expresses its support for enhancing the role of the Peacebuilding Commission, Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund.

"The Security Council recognizes that, in particular in the immediate aftermath of conflict, affected countries have urgent needs including, but not limited to, the re-establishment of the institutions of Government, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed forces, security sector reform, transitional justice, reconciliation, re-establishing the rule of law and respect for human rights, and economic revitalization. The Security Council underlines that civilian expertise in post-conflict peacebuilding is essential in helping to meet these needs.

"The Security Council encourages efforts to address the urgent need for rapidly deployable civilian expertise and stresses that the critical role for such expertise is working in cooperation with national authorities to strengthen national capacities.

"The Security Council highlights the need for the United Nations to play a leading role in the field in coordinating international efforts in post-conflict situations. The Security Council stresses that coordination between national authorities and others involved in longer-term reconstruction and development, including organs of the United Nations system in accordance with their respective mandates, the international financial institutions as well as with civil society and the business sector, is vital for the success of United Nations and international engagement in post-conflict situations.

"The Security Council stresses the need to ensure that finance is available from the outset for recovery and peacebuilding activities to meet immediate needs, and to lay a solid foundation for longer-term reconstruction and development. The Security Council reaffirms the role of regional organizations in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in

accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and the need to strengthen the capacity of regional organizations in helping countries recover from conflict.

"The Security Council encourages the Secretary-General, the Peacebuilding Commission, international and regional organizations and Member States to consider how to support national efforts in affected countries to secure a sustainable peace more rapidly and effectively, including in the areas of coordination, civilian deployment capabilities and financing. The Security Council invites the Secretary-General to provide advice within 12 months to the relevant United Nations organs on how best to take forward these issues within the United Nations system and, taking into consideration the views of the Peacebuilding Commission, how to coordinate peacebuilding activities and encourage the mobilization and most effective use of resources for urgent peacebuilding needs".

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2008/16.

There are no further speakers on my list. Once again, I would like to thank participants for attending. I also thank our interpreters and the Secretariat.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 7.10 p.m.